THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion: IN SIX BOOKS.

Written in LATIN BY

HUGO GROTIUS.

AND

Now Translated into ENGLISH,

With the Addition

Of a SEVENTH BOOK.

By *SIMON PATRICK* DEAN of *PETERBURGH*, and CHAPLAIN in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

The Second Edition Corrected.

LONDON,

Printed for *Rich. Royston*, Bookseller to His Most Sacred *Majesty*, at the *Angel* in *Amen*-Corner, MDCLXXXIII.

The Christian's Work and Reward.

Matth.11.29.30. *Take my yoke upon you, & learn of me. For my Yoke is easie & my burthen is light.*
Revel.2.10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*
1 Cor.9.24.25. *So run that ye may obtain. Every man that striveth for y mastery is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.*

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Most Sacred Majesty, at the Mayor

in *Amen-Corner*, MDCLXXXIII.

To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM
Earl of *BEDFORD*

Knight of the Moſt Noble Order of the GARTER, *&c.*

My very Good Lord and Patron.

My Lord,

I Am ſo deſirous to expreſs my Thankfulneſs to Your Lordſhip, as for all the reſt, ſo eſpecially, for the laſt Favour You have done me, in contributing ſo freely to the giving me ſome eaſe from that burden which grew too heavy for me; that I make bold to prefix Your Lordſhips Name to This Book of a great Man in another Nation; which I have Tranſlated, and will live, I be-

 lieve,

lieve, as long as Learning and Religion ſhall laſt among us.

Whereby your Lordſhip will ſee that I have only exchanged, not given over my Labours; and that I intend not to be leſs diligent in my ſtation, than when I preached more; but rather ſtudy induſtriouſly to ſerve the Publick good ſome other way.

Which that I might promote, I have augmented this Work of *Grotius*, by the Addition of another *Book*: not equal indeed in ſtrength of reaſoning, and variety of reading to the foregoing; but in brevity and perſpicuity, I hope, nothing inferiour: And, being a building relying, in great part, upon his Foundations, will ſtand as firm and unſhaken, as thoſe which excel it in beauty, and neatneſs of contrivance.

Such

Such as it is, I humbly preſent it to your Lordſhip; and praying God that the whole Work may have ſome effect for the reclaiming thoſe that are irreligious; or the ſetling thoſe who are wavering and doubtful; and the exciting us all, to hold faſt the Truth, as it is in the Lord Jeſus, I remain

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips moſt Humble

and obliged Servant,

S. PATRICK.

DEDICATORY.

A

PREFACE

Giving ſome ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR, and of this WORK.

THE Name of this Author hath been ſo illuſtrious in theſe Weſtern parts of the World, that as there are few perſons who read Books to whom it is not known; ſo there needs no more to recommend this Work, and procure it entertainment, with all thoſe that have heard of him. In which he hath faithfully laid out thoſe great Talents of reaſon and learning, wherewith God bleſſed him above moſt other Men, in the defence of his moſt holy Religion. Which he hath ſerved very much in other works of his; but in none more than this: becauſe it is of ſuch General uſe, and ſo ſatisfactory, that it may alone merit thoſe titles of honour, which the Men of learning have beſtowed on him; though they be as high, as well can be deviſed.

There

There is nothing more ordinary in our Selden, *than* vir Maximus, vir ſummus, *the greateſt, the chief of Men; when he ſpeaks of* Grotius. *Upon whom* Salmaſius *beſtows the Title of* ἐξοχώτατος, *moſt excellent; and as if he were in a rapture when he thought of him, cries out,* ὦ θαυμασιώτατε, O moſt admirable, or wonderful, *and* ſupereminentiſſime, *moſt ſupereminent* Grotius! *to whom he wiſhed much rather to be like, than to be the moſt eminent perſon, for riches and honour, in the whole World.* I *ſhall only add the character, which* Baudius *gave of him very early,* 1612. *in a* Scazon *he made upon him; where he thus admires him.*

Vir magne, vir mirande, vir ſine exemplo.

In Engliſh,

O thou great Man, thou wonderful Man,
A Man without example.

Yet as great a Man as he was, he fell into diſgrace in his own Countrey, and was thrown into Priſon (every body knows) in the Caſtle of Lupſtein. *In which ſtrict confinement he meditated many profitable Works, eſpecially in things Sacred. For, during his long Impriſonment, he found by a happy experience (as he*

he writes to Barlæus *a great while after*) *there was* a wonderful power in the holy Doctrines to ſupport the mind, and to keep it erect againſt all calamities. *And therefore for his own ſolace, in the firſt place, (as he tells another Friend) he ſet himſelf to write this little Book: which he intimates both in the beginning and in the concluſion of it, was then compoſed, or rather haſtily put together, when his Mind was more free than his Body. And therefore (when after ſeveral Editions he ſet it forth with Annotations,* 1640.) *he calls it in an Epiſtle to* Sarravius, Partum doloris quondam mei, *&c.* The child of my grief in time paſt; now a Monument of my Thankſgiving to God. *And as it was written originally in his own Language; ſo it was in Verſe; that it might be more popular, and more eaſily committed to memory, by the rudeſt people: ſuch as Mariners, for whom he chiefly intended it. He tells us as much in the Preface; but we may learn it more fully out of a Letter to him, on this ſubject, from* * Epiſcopius. *Who ſays, that the oftner he read over thoſe* Rythmes, *the more he was rapt both into love, and admiration of them. There being nothing in them which was not moſt neceſſary to be known; and was able to incline the hardeſt heart to embrace this holy*

* Inter Epiſt. Præſt. vir. p. 630.

Religi-

Religion. For it was hard to determine, *he ſays,* whether the Majeſty of the things, or the clearneſs and ſweetneſs of the expreſſions were moſt to be commended: the Majeſty of the matter not at all hindring the clearneſs of the Verſe, nor its being tyed to Verſe at all diluting or enervating the Majeſty of the matter. *Such a ſtrife there was between theſe two, with equal ſucceſs; that it became a queſtion, whether it was more divine to be able to have a ſolid and diſtinct conception in his mind of things ſo difficult and ſublime; or, having conceived them, to cloath them in ſuch comely and perſpicuous words; that at the firſt glance every Reader underſtood his great ſenſe, though bound up and fettered within the laws of verſe.*

Which way I ſuppoſe he choſe, becauſe it was the ancient manner of delivering the moſt uſeful things; as he himſelf obſerves in his Prolegomena *to* Stobæus *his* Florilegium; *which was written not long after this Book. Where, as a proof of it, he alledges that of* Homer; *who ſays,* Clytemneſtra, *did not incline to vice, till ſhe had loſt him, that was wont to ſing to her. For precepts of wiſdom ſo taught are exceeding charming to the minds of Youth; being not only more eaſily imprinted on the memory, but touching the affections more*

power-

powerfully, and to the very quick, than when otherwiſe ſpoken at large. And therefore the publick Laws were in the moſt ancient times thus written, as Ariſtotle *informs us: and that true Religion might be more eaſily conveyed into Peoples minds, and fixed there,* Apolinarius *tranſlated all the Books of* Moſes (*as* Sozomen *tells us,* L. vi. *cap.* 18.) *and the reſt of the Hiſtory of the Bible, as far as the reign of* Saul, *into Heroick verſe; in imitation of* Homer's *Poems,* Suidas *ſays, he put the whole Old Teſtament into ſuch Verſe; and it is not improbable, for what he did upon the* Pſalms *is ſtill remaining.*

If it were my preſent buſineſs, I could trace this way of Inſtruction down to our own times; and through our own Nation: in which it hath been very effectual, as the ſtory of Aldelmus *ſufficiently informs us. Who firſt brought in the compoſition of* Latin *verſe among the* Engliſh, *a little before* Edward *the Confeſſors time; and by his excellent faculty in ſinging, wrought ſuch wonderful effects upon the People, for the civilizing of their manners, and for their inſtruction in the duties of* Religion: *that* Lanfrank *by his own Authority, thought good to make him a Saint.*

The very ſame charms Grotius *hoped would have the ſame effect upon the rude Seamen of his*

his Country: into whom he desired by his Rymes, not only to instil a sense of piety; but to enable them to convey it to other Nations, with whom they traded. And it seems this work was so much famed, that it moved the curiosity of a great man in France *(into which* Grotius *went after his wonderful escape,* 1621. *out of that Prison, or rather Sepulchre, as he calls it in a Letter to a Friend, wherein it was first projected) to ask him very often, what the Contents of that Book were, which he had written in* Dutch, *upon this subject of Religion. Whom he satisfied, by translating the sense of it into the Latin Tongue, in the Year* 1628. *and addressing it unto that excellent Person, who made the inquiry,* viz. Hieronymus Bignonius. *Who together with* Grotius *and* Salmasius, *the famous Cardinal* Richlieu *(a notable Judge of Wits) was wont to say*, were the only Persons of thas Age, whom he lookt upon, as arrived to the highest pitch of Learning.*

* Epist. Cl. Sarravii. p. 146.

In which Translation, he tells Sarravius, *in a Letter to him that Year, he should find, if nothing else, that he had at least endeavoured* brevity with perspicuity. *Which made it so acceptable every where, though no longer in Verse, but now in Prose, that in the Year,* 1632. *I find (he tells* Cordesius *another Learned Man in* France*)

France*) *it was gone the* third *time to the Preſs; with ſome Additions. But not with ſo many, it ſeems, as ſome deſired; for there were thoſe who wiſhed he would have anſwered a Book of* Bodins, *which ſeemed to impugn it. This he thought a needleſs pains,* for whatſoever it is, *ſaith he (in a Letter to the ſame perſon**) that ſeems to ſhake the foundations I have laid (upon which the Chriſtian Faith relies) I have already obviated it; as far as is neceſſary to perſwade a Reader that is not pertinacious. As for thoſe Opinions, which are commonly received in Chriſtianity, but without the exact knowledge of which, we may be Chriſtians; they do not belong to my Argument.

* Epiſt. ad *Gallos*, p. 331. 417.

* Ib. pag. 407.

In the ſame Year alſo (1632) *I find it Tranſlated here into the* Engliſh *Language. Which He himſelf afterwards takes notice of, in a Letter to* Gerrard Voſſius, 1638*. *Where he tells him, that there were* (*beſide the* Engliſh) *two* High-Dutch *Tranſlations of this Book; one* French; *and that the* Engliſh *Embaſſador's Chaplain was turning it into* Greek; *and the* Romaniſts *themſelves into the* Perſian *Tongue: that by* God's *bleſſing it might convert the* Mahometans.

* Inter Epiſt. præſtant. virorum, p. 748

None

None of these could see any Socinianism *(or other dangerous heresie) in it; which some of the duller sort of learned Men, were forward to charge it withal: because he doth not directly prove in this Book the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Of which he gives this account in the forenamed Letter; 'that he heard a great Man (who was* Franc. 'Junius, *as I take it) condemn* du Plessis, 'and others, *for endeavouring to prove that 'Mystery by reasons fetcht from Nature, and 'by* Platonical *Testimonies; (sometimes not 'very pertinent) which ought not to come into 'a Disputation with* Atheists, Pagans, Jews, 'and Mahometans: *who must all be first 'drawn to believe the Holy Scriptures; that 'from thence they may learn such things, as cannot be known, but by Divine Revelation.*

This was the Reason he medled not with the Doctrine of the Trinity *directly: But if any body doubted of his Orthodoxy in this Point, They might see (he tells him in another Letter) what his opinion was, in his* Poems *then newly come forth; and the larger explication of it he reserved to his* Notes.

And for the same cause he did not distinctly treat of some other things; particularly about the Divinity *of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

and

and his Satisfaction: *for which omiſſion this Book was blamed, as* Sarravius *writes to him, by ſome who had nothing elſe to do, but to find fault with the labours of others. To which* Grotius *returned ſuch an Anſwer, as not only gave him, he tells us, moſt full ſatisfaction, in thoſe two Points; but enabled him to ſilence thoſe accuſers. He doth not intimate indeed what that reply was; but as to the former Point it is apparent from his Annotations, that he believed our Saviour to be indeed* God *of* God. *And that paſſage in the Concluſion of the* xxi Section *of the* fifth Book, *concerning the Meſſias being called in the Holy Scriptures by the Name of* God *and* Lord, *I ſhould have tranſlated thus*..... The Meſſias is called by that auguſt Name of God Jehovah, *and alſo of* Lord, viz. *ELOHIM and ADONAI. For ſo he explains himſelf, I have ſince taken notice, in his Annotations; and adds this obſervation, that the* Talmud *in* Taanith *ſays, that when the time ſhall come, ſpoken of* xxv. Iſa. 8. 9. (i. e. *of the Meſſiah*) Jehovah ſhall be ſhewn, as we ſay, with the finger: *that is, Men ſhall be able to point others to him, ſaying, Lo there is* Jehovah.

And as for the other thing, it is poſſible his Anſwer might be to the ſame purpoſe with

what he writ to * Voſſius. *In which he tells him, that if any one deſired to know (as he had already ſignified in a* Letter, *to one that ſaid he was accuſed of* Socinianiſm) *what his opinion was in the buſineſs of* Chriſt's *ſatisfaction, even ſince* Crellius *had written againſt him; it would appear plainly enough out of his Tranſlation of the* LIII. *of* Iſaiah, *in his Diſputation againſt the* Jews: (*which you may find here in the* V. Book, Section 19.) *and from hence alſo that in the Concluſion of this Work of the* Truth of Chriſtian Religion, *he doth not interpret thoſe words,* i Hebr. 3. καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος. *in the preſent tenſe,* making a purgation, *or* expiating our ſins, *as* Socinus *doth; but in the paſt time* expiatis peccatis noſtris, having expiated, *or* purged away our ſins. *How they come to be otherwiſe Tranſlated in his Annotations on that place, put forth ſince his death, I can give no account.*

* Epiſt. præſtant. Viror. p. 747.

And in like manner, I ſuppoſe, he ſatisfied another doubt about a paſſage in this Book, which Sarravius *deſired him to reſolve; though I cannot find his Anſwer to it: For he gives a punctual Anſwer afterward to a Queſtion propounded by a Miniſter of* Rouen; *who*

who askt him, where he had that of Rabbi Nechumias, *who made that publick Declaration (mentioned in the* Fifth Book, Sect. 14.) *concerning the appearing of Christ,* 50. *Years before our Saviour; to this effect:* That the time which *Daniel* had prefixed for the coming of the Messiah, could not be prolonged above those Fifty Years. *Which he tells* Sarravius * *is to to be found in the* Talmud, *in the Title* Sanhedrin (*as he remembred*) *and he thought also in* Abenada *upon* Daniel.

* Epist. Claud. Sarrav. p. 52.

This was in the Year 1640. *when he first put out this Book with* Annotations; *containing the Testimonies of those Authors, in words at length; whom he had alledged: but had forgotten, it seems, to set down where he had this passage of* Rabbi Nechumias. *Nor is it now to be found among the Annotations; and therefore they that next Print the Book so inlarged, will do well to supply it from hence, out of* Sarravius. *Who was the first Person* * *to whom he made a present of it after it came out, with the Addition of Testimonies: desiring to be admonished by him, if, in the midst of much business, any thing had escaped him,*

* Epist. ad Gallos, p. 460.

which was leſs exactly ſpoken; while he ſtudied to ſerve the Chriſtian cauſe.

To which he replies immediately, "*That* "*as he could not but eſteem it, a very great* "*honour to be acknowledged and beloved by* "*the* Coryphæus *of all Learning, both Sa-*"*cred and Prophane; ſo he eſteemed this* "*as a* Golden Book, *wherein* Grotius *had* "*joyned Learning together with Piety:* "*conſulting, that is, the Diſeaſe of the Age;* "*to whoſe Palate, Piety (of it ſelf) had* "*little ſavour. And, as for the immenſe* "*collection of Teſtimonies then added, he made* "*it appear by them, that in all his ſtudies* "*the glory of Chriſt had alway been before* "*his eyes: his holy diligence and induſtry* "*having diſcovered ſo many, and ſuch things,* "*which had eſcaped the ſagacious eyes of* "*others.*

And not long after he propounded ſome doubts, according to his own deſire; and mentioned ſome exceptions, (as was noted before) which ſome, who had no good will to him, took at this Golden Book, *as he again calls it: and notwithſtanding the harſh cenſures of ſome Learned Men, this excellent Perſon ſtill perſiſted in his high eſteem of the worth of this Author; and*

believed

believed all unprejudiced Men would ever look upon him with great Veneration. So he tells Salmaſius, *Five Years after* * (1645) Whether they will or no, *Grotius* will alway be accounted a great Man, by you and me; and by all that love Equity and Goodneſs: for he is full of envy, who denies due praiſes to ſuch an Hero. *And a little while after, hearing of the news of his death, he moſt ſadly bewails it,* * *as the extinction of the bright Star of that Age; whoſe Name would be great as long as either Books or Learning were in honour. And while he had breath, he ſaith, he would glory in this, that he once had familiar acquaintance with a Man, who was* re & nomine Magnus, *no leſs great indeed than his Name imported.*

* Epiſt. *Claud. Sarrav.* p. 146.

* Ib. p. 171.

This affection he ſeems to have carried with him to his Grave, and honoured his Memory at ſuch a rate, that in the Year 1648. *he ſtill ſays, he was proud of the Friendſhip of that Man; by whom to have been known was glorious, and who would be reverenced in all future Ages. In concluſion he calls him* that Bleſſed Soul: *even after*

he himſelf had pronounced this ſentence againſt Grotius *, that he favoured the Papiſts; and not only yielded too much to them in his later Writings; but expreſſed too much diſaffection to the reformed in thoſe Countries. All this he candidly paſſed over with this cenſure *; He is the beſt Man who hath feweſt faults; for there is no body to be found without ſome.

* Ib. p. 196.

* Ib. p. 146.

And the ſame favourable judgment, I ſuppoſe, all ſerious and conſidering men, will paſs upon him now; and not be hindred by any prejudices, which may have been taken up againſt him among our ſelves, from reaping that benefit which they may receive by reading this excellent Book. Which I preſent again to the view of the Engliſh *World, and have in a manner made a new Tranſlation of it: the former, which came out near* 50. *Years ago, being ſo defective; that there were few Paragraphs in it, which ſtood not in need of ſome amendment, and in a great number the ſenſe was quite miſtaken.*

Who the Tranſlator was, I am ignorant; but it is certain, he either did not underſtand

ſtand the Latin Tongue, or did not attend to what he was about, as appears by innumerable Inſtances. But one may ſuffice, in the Third Book, Sect. 3. where he Tranſlates altera Petri, the one Epiſtle of Peter. Beſides there is plain Arianiſm in his Tranſlation, (Book V. Sect. 21.) for he ſays the Son was not uncreate as the Father is; when in Grotius the words are, the Son is not ingenitus unbegotten as the Father is.

Yet where the Tranſlation was paſſable, I have let it go as it was; that I might not ſeem to be too curious a Cenſurer of other Mens labours. And I have added ſuch paſſages as were not there; the Book it ſelf having been inlarged by Grotius, ſince that old Engliſh Tranſlation. I know not how neceſſary it might be at that time, when it was firſt put into our Language; but now I think nothing can be more: And to make it of larger uſe, I have added alſo a Seventh Book of my own. In which, out of thoſe Principles chiefly, which Grotius builds upon in his Six Books, I have ſhewn that Chriſtian Religion hath ſuffered very much by the Church of of Rome; and that we need not go thither to be aſſured of the Truth of that Religion: but ſhall be better informed in our own Church by the Holy Scriptures, and ſuch works as theſe.

I have not quoted all my Authors, no more than Grotius *did in the first Editions of his Book. And it would have made the Work also too long (I thought) to Translate his Testimonies, and add the like of my own. Nor would it have been so useful to common Readers; who do but perplex themselves in abundance of quotations, and must, after all, believe that we report them truly: and therefore may as well believe us when we say; that they are ready at hand to attest every thing, which is here affirmed from their Authority.*

Since the finishing of this little Labour, I was informed by a Friend, *that* Mr. Clement Barksdale *had translated part of this Work into* English, *and upon search, I found the three first Books among some other Discourses, Printed* 1669. *And I am told further by another* Friend, *that he hath lately added (though I have not seen it) the three last Books. Which if I had known sooner, it might have saved me, I believe, most, if not all, of the pains I have taken. But I was perfectly ignorant of it; as I perceive he was of any former Translation, before his. For in that Edition of his Discourses, where he hath added the*

Third

Third *Book of this Work, concerning the* Authority of the Scriptures, *he ſaith, it had not been till then in* Engliſh.

But it will do no hurt, though the ſame good thing be reached out to us, by more hands than one: and ſo I leave it to Gods Bleſſing, upon the Readers ſerious peruſal.

S. P.

A

A

CHRISTIAN PRAYER

FOR THE

Adverſaries of True Religion.

O Merciful God, who haſt made all Men, and hateſt nothing that thou haſt made, nor wouldeſt the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould be converted and live; Have mercy upon all *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels* and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardneſs of heart, and contempt of thy Word: And ſo fetch them home, bleſſed Lord, to thy Flock, that they may be ſaved among the remnant of the true *Iſraelites*, and be made one Fold under one Shepherd, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the Holy Spirit, one God, World without end.

Amen.

To the Honourable

Hieronymus Bignonius,

The KING'S Advocate in the Supreme Court of *PARIS.*

SIR,

YOU are wont very often to ask me, who am ſenſible how highly you have deſerved of your Country, of learning, and (if you will permit me to add that) of me alſo; what the Argument of thoſe Books is, which I wrote in my own Country Language, *in the behalf of Chriſtian* Religion. *Nor do I wonder you ſhould make ſuch a queſtion; for you who have read, and that with ſo great judgment, all that is worth the reading; cannot be ignorant, what pains hath been already taken in this matter: by* Raymundus Sebundus, *with Philoſophical ſubtilty; by* Ludovicus Vives, *with variety of Dialogues; but eſpecially by your* Mornay, *with no leſs* Learning *than* Eloquence. *For which cauſe it may ſeem more profitable to tranſlate ſome of them, into the vulgar Tongue; than to begin a new Work upon this ſubject.*

But what other men will judge of this matter I know not; my hope is that before you, Sir, *who*

are

are so fair and easie a Judge, I may be absolved, if I say; that having read not only those Authors, but what the Jews have written for the old Judaical, and Christians for our Religion; I thought good also to use my own judgment, such as it is, and to allow that freedom to my mind, which, when I wrote it, was denied to my body. For I thought that Truth was not to be contended for, but only with truth; and with such truth also as I approved in my own mind: knowing it would be but a vain labour to go about to perswade others of that, which I had not first perswaded my self to believe.

Omitting therefore such arguments, as seem'd to me to have little weight in them; and the authority of such Books, as I either knew or suspected to be counterfeit; I selected those, both out of the ancient and modern times, which appeared to me to have the greatest force in them. And what things I fully assented unto, those I both cast into an orderly method, and expressed in as popular a manner as I could invent; and likewise included in verse, that they might be the better committed to memory.

For my intention was to do some good service hereby to all my Countrey-men; especially to seafaring men: that in their long Voyages, wherein they have nothing to do, they might lay out their time and imploy it; rather than, as too many do, lose and misspend it.

Where-

Wherefore, taking my riſe from the commendation of our Nation, which for diligent skill in Navigation much excels the reſt, I ſtir'd them up to uſe this Art, as a Divine benefit: not meerly for their own gain, but for the propagation of the true, that is, the Chriſtian Religion. For they would neither want matter for ſuch endeavours, when in their long Voyages they commonly met, either with Pagans, as in China *and* Guinea; *or with* Mahometans, *as under the* Turkiſh *Empire, the* Perſian *and the* Africans; *or with* Jews, *who as they are now profeſt enemies of Chriſtians, ſo are diſperſed through the greateſt part of the World: and there would always be ſtore of impious men, who are ready upon occaſion to vent the Poiſon, which for fear they keep concealed. Againſt which miſchiefs I wiſht that our Countrey-men might be ſufficiently armed: and that they who are more ingenious than others, would uſe their utmoſt endeavours to confute Errours; and the reſt would at leaſt be ſo cautious, as not to be overcome by them.*

And that I might ſhew Religion is no frivolous thing, I begin, in the firſt Book, at the ground or foundation thereof; which is, that there is a God. *Now that I attempt to prove after this manner.*

The

The First Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

That there is a GOD.

THat there are ſome things which had a *beginning*, is clear to common ſenſe, and by the confeſſion of all: howbeit thoſe things were not cauſes to themſelves of their own being. For that which is not cannot produce any thing, neither had it power to be before it was; therefore it follows, that the ſaid things had their beginning from ſome other thing different from themſelves: Which may be averred not only of ſuch things as now we ſee, or ever have beheld, but of ſuch alſo as gave original unto theſe, and ſo upward until we come to ſome *prime cauſe* which never began to be, and which

(as we ſay) hath its exiſtence *by neceſſity*, and not after any *contingent* manner: And this, whatever it be, (whereof by and by we ſhall ſpeak) is *that* which is meant by *Divine Power or Godhead*.

Another reaſon to prove that *there is ſome ſuch divine Majeſty*, is taken from the moſt manifeſt conſent of all Nations, ſuch I mean as have not utterly loſt the light of reaſon and good manners; and become altogether wild and ſavage. For ſince thoſe things which proceed from Mans pleaſure and appointment, are neither the ſame among all Men, and are often ſubject to change; and yet there is no place where this notion is not found, and it is not changed by the alterations of times (as *Ariſtotle* himſelf notes, who was not over credulous in ſuch matters) we muſt aſſign ſome cauſe of it, that extends it ſelf to all Mankind. Which can be no other, than either an Oracle of God himſelf, or a Tradition derived from the firſt Parents of Mankind. The former of which if we admit, the thing in queſtion is granted; and if we affirm the latter, there can no good reaſon be given, why we ſhould believe thoſe firſt Parents did deliver a falſhood, to all their Poſterity, in a matter of the greateſt moment.

Moreover, whether we conſider thoſe *parts of the World* which were anciently known, or thoſe that are lately found out, whereſoever there is (as we have ſaid) any *reliques* of humanity, there certainly is *this truth* acknowledged, as well by ſuch *Heathens* as have any ingenuity and wiſdom, as alſo by thoſe that are of a more dull and ſtupid diſpoſi-

diſpoſition: The former whereof queſtionleſs could not all be deceived; neither is it likely that theſe later ſo ſilly and ſimple ſhould any way deviſe how to *deceive* one another.

Neither let any Man here object, that there have been ſome in many Ages, who have either believed there is no God; or profeſſed they did not believe it: For both the ſmall number of them, and the Univerſal rejection of their opinion, as ſoon as their Arguments were underſtood; make it appear, that it did not proceed from the uſe of right reaſon, which is common to all Men; but either from the affectation of novelty (ſuch as was in him that would needs maintain the Snow to be black) or from a corrupt mind, like as Meats to a diſtempered Palate, taſte quite otherwiſe than indeed they are. Eſpecially ſince both Hiſtory and other Writings teach us, that the honeſter any man was, the more diligently did he preſerve the knowledge of God. And further, that this departure from ſo anciently a received opinion, chiefly proceeds from the naughty diſpoſition of thoſe, whoſe intereſt it is that there ſhould be no God; that is, no Judge of humane actions, appears even from hence: that whatſoever they put in the room thereof: whether a ſucceſſion of ſeveral kinds of things, without any beginning; or a concourſe of atomes; or any thing elſe whatſoever; it hath not leſs, if not greater, difficulties, nor is at all more credible (as is manifeſt to any Man, that vouchſafes an ordinary attention to the matter) than that opinion which is already received.

As for that which ſome pretend, that they cannot believe there is a God, becauſe they cannot

ſee him; if they ſee any thing, they cannot but ſee how unworthy this thought is of a Man, who doth but believe that he hath a mind, which he never ſaw, no more than he doth the eſſence of God. Nor becauſe we cannot comprehend the Nature of God by our underſtanding, ought we therefore to deny there is any ſuch Nature: for this is proper to every inferiour creature, not to be able to comprehend thoſe Beings which are ſuperiour, and more excellent than it ſelf. The Beaſts cannot conceive what Man is, much leſs can they know after what manner Men inſtitute and govern Common-wealths, meaſure the Stars, and ſail upon the Sea; for all theſe things are out of their reach. From which very thing, Man, who is raiſed, and that not of himſelf, by the nobility of his nature, above the Beaſts, ought to infer; that that Being by whom he is made ſuperiour to Beaſts, is no leſs ſuperiour to him, than he himſelf to the Beaſts; and that therefore there is ſome Nature, which, as far more excellent, tranſcends his comprehenſion.

SECT. II.

That there is but One GOD.

WE having evinced that *there is a God*, it follows that we ſpeak of his Attributes. The firſt whereof is this, that *there are not more Gods, but one God.* This is gathered from hence, that God (as was ſaid before) is what He is neceſſarily, and of Himſelf. Now whatſoever is neceſſarily, or of it ſelf, is conſidered not in its gene-

general notion, but as actually in being. Now things actually in being are particular. But if you ſuppoſe more Gods, you cannot find a reaſon in each of them, why they ſhould neceſſarily be; nor why two rather than three, or ten rather than five ſhould be believed.

Beſides, the multiplication of thoſe particular things that are of the ſame nature, proceeds from the *exuberancy* and fruitfulneſs of the *cauſes* whence ſuch things more or leſs are generated: but of *God* there is neither beginning nor any *cauſe*.

Furthermore, in all particular things, there are certain ſpecial and particular *properties* whereby the ſame things are ſeverally diſtinguiſhed: now to make ſuch a diſtinction in *God*, is altogether needleſs, ſince that he is *moſt neceſſary and ſimple* by nature. Neither can any Man perceive any ſigns or tokens of the *plurality of Gods*. For this *univerſal Sphere* or circumference which we behold, makes up but one compleat World, wherein there is one moſt beautiful and glorious *Sun*: Likewiſe in every Man, the little world, there is but one ſpecial governing part, to wit, *his ſoul or mind*. Beſides, if we ſhould ſuppoſe two Gods, or more, freely acting and willing, what they pleaſe, they might will contrary things; and then one of them might be hindred by the other, from effecting what he had a mind to have done. But to ſay that God can be hindred in what He deſigns, is unworthy of his Majeſty.

SECT. III.

That all Perfection is in GOD.

THat we may know the reſt of God's Attributes, let it be conſidered; that whatſoever is wont to be underſtood by the Name of *Perfection* (which word we muſt be content to uſe, ſince our Language furniſhes us with no better, to expreſs the Greek Τελειότης) is in God, may be thus proved. What perfection ſoever there is in things, it either had a beginning; or had no beginning. That which had no beginning, is the perfection of God: and that which had a beginning, of neceſſity muſt have ſomething, that gave it ſuch beginning. And ſince nothing among all the things that have a being, is made of nothing; it follows that thoſe perfections which appear to be in any effects were the reaſon why *the cauſe* thereof could produce any thing accordingly; and conſequently are all in the *firſt cauſe*. Neither muſt it be here imagined, that the *firſt cauſe* can afterward be deprived of its *perfection*; either by ſome other thing different from it ſelf, becauſe that which is eternal hath no dependance upon any other thing, neither can be liable and ſubject unto their actions; or of it ſelf, becauſe every Nature deſires its own perfection.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

GOD is infinite.

AND we may add further, that theſe *perfections* which are in *God*, are in him after an eminent and *infinite* manner; for the nature of every thing is finite and limited, either for that the cauſe whence it proceeded hath communicated ſuch a meaſure or degree of *exiſtence*, and no more thereunto, or for that the ſame nature was not capable of any further *perfection*; Now there is no nature that doth communicate any thing of its own unto *God*, neither is he capable of ought that any other thing can impart; being (as before we ſaid) altogether abſolute, and *neceſſary* of himſelf.

SECT. V.

That GOD is eternal, omnipotent, omniſcient, and abſolutely good.

AGain, foraſmuch as all things that have *life*, are ſaid to be more *perfect* than thoſe without *life*; and thoſe which have power of acting, than thoſe which want it; and thoſe endued with *underſtanding* ſuperiour to ſuch creatures as lack it; and thoſe which are *good*, better than thoſe that come ſhort in *goodneſs*; it followeth from that which hath been ſpoken, that *all thoſe attributes* are in *God*, and that after an *in-*

finite manner. Therefore is he *infinite* in life, that is, *eternal*; *infinite* power, that is, *omnipotent*; So likewiſe is he *omniſcient*, and altogether good without any exception.

SECT. VI.

That GOD is the Author and cauſe of all things.

FUrthermore, it follows from that which hath been ſpoken, that what things ſoever *ſubſiſt*, the ſame have the *original* of their *being from God*: for we have proved that that which is *neceſſary* of it ſelf, can be but *one*; whence we collect that all other things beſides this had their *original* from ſomewhat different from themſelves.

Now ſuch things as have their *beginning* from another, we have ſeen before how that either in themſelves or in their cauſes, they proceeded from *him* which had no beginning, that is, *from God.*

Neither is this manifeſt by *reaſon* only, but alſo after ſome ſort by very ſenſe: for if we conſider the wonderful frame and faſhion of *Man's body*, both within and without, and how that each part and parcel thereof hath its *proper uſe* without the ſtudy or induſtry of his Parents, and yet with ſuch art that the moſt accompliſhed Philoſophers and Phyſicians could never ſufficiently admire it; this verily ſhews the Author of Nature to be a moſt excellent Mind: concerning which matter *Galen* hath written well, eſpecially where he ſpeaks of the uſe of the *eye*, and of the *hand.*

hand. Yea more, the very bodies of mute *beaſts* do teſtifie the ſame: for their *parts* are not framed and compoſed by the power and vertue of the matter whereof they conſiſt, but by ſome ſuperiour and higher cauſe deſtinating them to a certain end.

Neither is this plain by *man* and *beaſts* alone, but alſo by *plants* and *herbs*, as hath accurately been obſerved by ſome *Philoſophers*. This further is excellently noted by *Strabo*, concerning the *ſituation* of the waters, which, if we conſider the quality of their matter, ought to be placed in the *middle* between the earth and the air, whereas they are now included and diſperſed within the earth, to the end they might be no hinderance, either to the fruitfulneſs of the ground, or to the life of Man. Now to propoſe *that*, or any other *end*, to any action, is the peculiar property of an *underſtanding nature*. Neither are all things only ordained for their peculiar *ends*, but alſo for the good and benefit of the whole *Univerſe*, as appears particularly in the water but now mentioned, which againſt its own proper nature is moved upward, leſt by the interpoſition of a vacuity there ſhould be a gap in the Univerſe: which is ſo framed, that by the continued coheſion of its parts, it ſuſtains and upholds it ſelf. Now it cannot poſſibly be, that this common end ſhould be thus intended, together with an inclination in things thereunto, but by the power and purpoſe of ſome *intelligent nature*, whereunto the whole *Univerſe* is in ſubjection. Moreover amongſt the beaſts there are certain actions obſerved to be ſo regular and orderly done, that it is manifeſt enough they proceed from ſome kind of *reaſon*; as is plain in *Piſmires*

and

and especially in *Bees*, and likewise in other creatures, which before they make any trial do naturally eschew such things as are hurtful, and seek after such things as are profitable for them. Now that this instinct or inclination of finding and judging things, is not in them by their own power, it is clear; for that they do always operate after the same manner, neither have they any vertue or efficacy at all to the doing other things which are no more weighty: wherefore they must needs receive their power from some *reasonable external Agent*, which directs them or imprints in them such efficacy as they have, and this *reasonable* and *intelligent Agent*, is no other than God himself.

In the next place consider we the *Stars* of Heaven, and amongst the rest, as most eminent, the *Sun* and the *Moon*, both which for the making the earth fruitful, and preserving living Creatures in their health and vigour, do so seasonably perform their course of motion, that a better cannot be devised. For when otherwise their motion through the Æquator had been much more simple, we see that they have another motion by an *oblique Circle*, to the end, the benefit of their favourable aspects might be communicated to more parts of the earth.

Now as the earth is ordained for the use and benefit of living Creatures, so are all terrestrial things appointed chiefly for the service of man, who by his wit and reason can subdue the most furious creature among them; whence the very *Stoicks* did collect, that the World was made for Man's sake.

Howbeit, since it exceeds the sphere of humane power, to bring the heavenly bodies in subjection

jection to him; neither is it to be imagined that they will ever ſubmit themſelves to man of their own accord; it follows therefore that there is ſome *ſuperiour mind* or *ſpirit*, by whoſe ſole appointment thoſe fair and glorious bodies do perpetual ſervice unto man, though he be placed far below them; which *ſame mind* is no other than the framer of the ſtars, even the *Maker* of the whole World. Alſo the motions of theſe ſtars which are ſaid to be Excentrical and Epicyclical (*i. e.* in a Circle within the Orb of another Star) do plainly ſhew, not the power of matter, but the appointment of a free Agent. The ſame do the Poſitions of the Stars teſtifie, ſome in this part, others in the other part of Heaven: together with the ſo unequal form of the Earth, and of the Seas. Nor can we refer it to any thing elſe, that the Stars move this, rather than another way. The moſt perfect form alſo and figure of the World, *viz.* roundneſs; as alſo the parts thereof, ſhut up as it were in the boſom of the Heavens, and diſpoſed with a marvellous order, do all expreſly declare, that they were not tumbled together, or conjoyned as they are, *by chance*, but wiſely ordained by *ſuch an underſtanding* as is endued with ſuper-eminent excellency. For what Ninny is there ſo ſottiſh, as to expect any thing ſo accurate and exact from chance? He might as well believe that Stones and Timber got caſually together, and put themſelves into the form of a Houſe: or that out of Letters ſhuffled careleſly as it hapned, there came forth an excellent Poem. A thing ſo unlikely, that even a few *Geometrical figures* eſpied on the *Sea-ſhore*, gave the beholder juſt ground to argue, that ſome *man* had been there; it being evident enough

enough that ſuch things could not proceed from *meer chance.*

Furthermore, that *Mankind* was not from all Eternity, but at a certain time had a *common beginning*, may be manifeſted among other things from the progreſs of *Arts* and *Sciences*; yea, by the *very ground* whereupon we tread, which was anciently rude and untill'd, but afterward became poſſeſſed with Inhabitants: which alſo *the Language* ſpoken in *Iſlands*, derived from adjacent Countries, doth witneſs. The ſame is apparent by *certain ordinances*, ſo generally received amongſt Men, that the *inſtitution* thereof may not be thought to have proceeded ſo much from the *inſtinct of nature*, or *evident deductions of reaſon*, as from *perpetual* and *conſtant tradition*, ſcarce interrupted in a few places, either by the *malice* or *miſery* of Man: ſuch was that of killing Beaſts in Sacrifice, uſed in former times; and ſuch alſo are now the modeſty and ſhamefac'dneſs about venereal things, the ſolemnities of Marriages, and the abhorrence of all inceſtuous Embraces.

SECT. VII.

Anſwer to that Objection concerning the cauſe of evil.

NEither ought we to doubt of that which hath been ſpoken, becauſe we ſee *many evil things come to paſs*; the ſource and cauſe whereof cannot be aſcribed unto God, who (as before hath been ſhewn) is *good*, after the moſt perfect

perfect and abſolute degree of *Goodneſs*. For when we ſaid that *God* was the author and cauſe of all things, we addded withal that he was the cauſe of ſuch things as *really do ſubſiſt*: And no abſurdity (that I ſee) will follow, if we affirm that thoſe things which have true and real exiſtence, are the cauſes of ſome certain accidents, as namely of actions, or the like. The Almighty (we know) created both Man, and thoſe more ſublime Minds, the Angels, endued with *liberty of action*; which *liberty* in it ſelf is not ſinful, yet by its *power* ſome ſins may be committed. Now to make *God* the *author* of theſe evils, which are morally evil, is no better than *blaſphemy*: howbeit there are other kind of *evils*, ſo called becauſe they afflict ſome perſon with *grief* or *loſs*, and theſe we may affirm to be inflicted by *God* for the reformation and amendment of ſome ſinner, or for puniſhment anſwerable to an offence, which to ſay is no impiety, ſince that ſuch *evils* have nothing in them contrary to *goodneſs*, but rather they proceed from *goodneſs it ſelf*; like a bitter *potion* from a good *Phyſician*.

SECT. VIII.

Againſt the Opinion of two Principles or cauſes of things.

HEre by the way, it may be noted, that the opinion of thoſe Men is to be abandoned and avoided, which make *two efficient cauſes*, the one *good*, and the other *evil*: for from two Principles oppoſite to each other, there may follow the

the ruine and deſtruction, but in no wiſe a well ordered compoſition of things. Neither is this to paſs for truth, to wit, that as there is ſomething *good* of it ſelf, ſo likewiſe there muſt needs be ſomething abſolutely *evil* in it ſelf; ſeeing that *evil* is a certain *defect*, which cannot be but in a thing that hath *exiſtence*, which very having of *exiſtence*, or being is *good*.

SECT. IX.

That GOD *doth govern the whole World.*

MOreover that this whole *Univerſe* is governed by the *providence of God*, is evident, for that not only *men*, which have right reaſon and underſtanding, but alſo the *fowles*, and *beaſts* both wild and tame, which have in them ſome thing correſpondent to reaſon, do bear a *kind* of providence, or *reſpectful care* over the *iſſue* which they bring forth. Which *perfection*, ſince it is a part of goodneſs, muſt needs be attributed to *God*; and ſo much the rather, becauſe he is both *omniſcient* and *omnipotent*, ſo that he can no way be ignorant of ſuch things as are done, or to be done; and can eaſily direct and order *the ſame* as he pleaſeth. To which alſo belongs that which we have ſpoken before, concerning the *moving* of things contrary to their proper nature, to ſerve an Univerſal end.

SECT.

SECT. X.

Yea, Sublunary things.

AND that they are much out of the way, who ſhut up this providence within the celeſtial Orbs, and would have it deſcend no lower than the Moon, is apparent; both from the reaſon now mentioned, whoſe force extends to all created things; and alſo from hence, that the courſe of the Stars, as the beſt Philoſophers acknowledge, and experience ſufficiently demonſtrates, are ordained for the uſe of Man. Now it ſtands but with equity that that Creature ſhould be *more regarded* for whoſe ſake another is ordained, than that which is appointed for anothers uſe.

Neither are *they* leſs erroneous that ſay this *providence* is extended unto *univerſal* things only, and not to *particulars*; for if they will have *God* to be ignorant of particular things, as ſome of them have profeſſed, then verily *God* could not underſtand himſelf; neither ſhould he be infinite in knowledge, as we have proved him before to be, if it be not extended unto every thing. But then, if *God* do know theſe things, why can he not alſo have care of them? eſpecially ſince that particulars, as they are particulars, are appointed for ſome certain end, both ſpecial and general: And the *common eſſences* of things, which by the confeſſion of the ſaid Authors are preſerved by *God*, cannot ſubſiſt but in their *ſingulars*; So that if theſe *ſingulars*, being forſaken by *Divine Providence*, may periſh, then may the whole kinds likewiſe.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

This is further proved by the preſervation of Empires.

ANother forcible Argument of *Divine providence* particularly over humane affairs, both Philoſophers and Hiſtorians acknowledge in the *preſervation of Commonwealths:* firſt in *general*, for that wherefoever the courſe and order of ruling and obeying is once admitted, the ſame always continues there: Then alſo, oftentimes in *particular*, it is evident by the long continuation of this or that very form of government thorow many ages, as of a *Monarchy* with the *Aſſyrians*, *Ægyptians*, and *Franks*; of an *Ariſtocracy* with the *Venetians*, and the like. For although Man's wiſdom and policy have ſome ſtroke in point of government; yet if we rightly conſider the multitude of wicked men, and the harms that may proceed from without, and the changes that are naturally incident to humane affairs, it may ſeem impoſſible for any State ſo long to ſubſiſt, unleſs it were upheld by a *conſtant particular care*, and by the *power of a Divine hand*. Which is more evidently ſeen, when it pleaſes God to change Empires, and tranſlate them from one to another. For to thoſe Inſtruments, whom he thinks good to uſe in that buſineſs, as a thing deſtined by himſelf (ſuppoſe *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, *Cæſar* the Dictator, *Cingi* among the *Tartars*, *Namcaa* among the *Chineſes*) all things whatſoever, even thoſe which do not depend on humane prudence, ſucceed more proſperouſly

ſperouſly, beyond their own wiſhes, that is ſutable to the uſual variety in humane caſualties. Which ſtrange correſpondence, and combination, or conſpiring, as we may call it, of events to a certain end, is a manifeſt token of a provident direction. Like as at Dice, if a Man now and then throw a lucky caſt, which wins all, it may be no more than a chance: but if he throw the very ſame an hundred times, there is no body, who will not conclude, that this proceeds from ſome extraordinary Art.

SECT. XII.

And by Miracles.

ANother moſt certain proof of *God's providence*, may be taken from thoſe *miracles* and *prophecies* which are recorded in Hiſtories: Where though many fabulous things be related in that kind, yet thoſe that are teſtified by ſufficient Witneſſes living in the time when they came to paſs; ſuch I mean as were defective neither in judgment nor in honeſty, are not to be deſpiſed as altogether impoſſible. For in as much as *God* is both *omnipotent* and *omniſcient*, what can hinder him from ſignifying what he knows, or what he pleaſeth to do; and that even beyond the common courſe of nature, which being made and ordained by him, becomes ſubject unto him by the title of creation? Now if any do object that ſuch things might have been done by ſubordinate powers and *minds* inferiour to *God*; to them we anſwer, that ſo much may be granted

indeed: but yet this makes way, that the ſame may the more eaſily be credited of *God*, who is to be thought either to work by the mediation of thoſe *Agents*, or elſe out of his wiſdom to permit them when they bring to paſs any ſuch thing. For in well ordered Kingdoms there is nothing done againſt the Statutes and common Laws but by the arbitrement or permiſſion of the *Supreme Governours*.

SECT. XIII.

Specially among the Jews, *whereunto credit may be given by reaſon of the long continuance of their Religion.*

NOW that there have indeed been ſome *miracles* ſeen, though the credit of other Hiſtories ſhould be queſtionable, yet it is manifeſt enough in the *Jewiſh Religion*: which albeit, it hath long been deſtitute of all humane helps, yea, expoſed to contempt and ſcorn; yet for all that, hath ſtill continued almoſt in all the climates and parts of the World even unto this day; whereas all other *Religions* (ſaving the Chriſtian, which is the perfection, as it were, of the *Jewiſh*) have either vaniſhed, as ſoon as the Imperial Power and Authority was withdrawn whereby they were ſupported, as all the *Paganiſh*: or elſe are ſtill perpetually upheld by the ſame power and authority, as *Mahumetaniſm*. Now if it be demanded why the Jewiſh Religion hath taken ſuch deep root in the hearts of the *Hebrews*, as that it cannot

cannot thence be eradicated? no better reason can be given or conceived than this; namely, that those *Jews* that are now alive did from their Parents, as those Parents from their Progenitors, and so upward until the times of *Moses* and *Joshua*, receive those miracles mentioned in Scripture, *by certain and constant Tradition*, which *miracles* were done chiefly at the departing out of *Ægypt*, and in their journey through the Wilderness, and entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, whereof their Ancestors were then eye-witnesses. Nor is it at all credible, that it could otherwise have come to pass, that a people who were sufficiently stiff-necked, and of a stubborn disposition, should take upon them a Law burdened with so many Rites; or that wise Men out of the many marks of Religion, which humane reason could have invented, should chuse Circumcision: which could not be received without very great pain; nor retained without the derision of all strangers; and had nothing in it to recommend it, save only this; that God was its Author.

SECT. XIV.

Also by the truth and antiquity of Moses *his Story.*

BEsides, *The writings of Moses*, wherein those *miracles* are recorded to posterity, do gain the greatest credit *thereunto*, not only because it was always a setled opinion and constant report amongst the *Hebrews*, that this same *Moses*

was commended by the *Oracle of God* to be a Leader of the People, but alſo becauſe it is manifeſt enough, that he neither affected his own glory, nor deſired their riches; foraſmuch as himſelf reveals his own faults and delinquencies, which he might have concealed; and alſo he aſſigned the dignity of his Kingdom and Prieſthood unto ſtrangers, whence his own Poſterity was brought to the common condition of *Levites*. By all which it appears, that he had no reaſon to forge untruths; Neither doth he uſe any diſſembling or alluring language, ſuch as commonly colours over a lye, but he ſpeaks after a plain ingenuous manner, according to the quality of the thing he treats of.

Add hereunto the undoubted *antiquity* of the Books of *Moſes*, to which no other writings are therein comparable: An argument whereof is, for that the *Grecians* (from whom all kinds of learning were derived to other Heathens) do confeſs they received their very Letters from others; which Letters of theirs have no other order, or name, or ancient form than that of the Syriac or Hebrew Tongue: as alſo for that the moſt ancient *Grecian Laws*, whence the *Romans* collected theirs, had their Original from the Laws of *Moſes*.

SECT.

SECT. XV.

And by the Testimony of many Gentiles.

MOreover besides these, there are many testimonies of such as were aliens from the *Jewish Religion*, which declare that the most ancient reports which passed for truth among all Nations, were agreeable to what *Moses* hath related in his Writings. Thus what things he related concerning the beginning of the World, the same are found also recorded in the most ancient Histories of the *Phœnicians*, which are collected by *Sancuniathon*, and translated by *Philo Biblius*; and partly also found amongst the *Indians* and *Ægyptians*: Hence it is that in *Linus*, *Hesiod*, and many of the *Grecians*, mention is made of a *Chaos*, which some have intimated by the name of an Egg: also of the making of living creatures, and last of all of Man according to a *Divine Image*; and of Man's dominion over other creatures; all which may be read in sundry Authors, and at last in *Ovid*, who transcribed them out of the *Greek* Writers. That all things were made by the *Word of God*, was confessed even by *Epicharmus* and the *Platonicks*, and before them by a most ancient Writer (not of those Hymns, which now go under that name, but) of those Verses which antiquity called *Orphean verses*; not because they had *Orpheus* for their Author, but because they summarily comprised his Doctrine. *Empedocles* acknowledged that the Sun was not the *primitive light*, but a fit *receptacle* of light. *Aratus* and *Catullus* think that above the sphere

or orb of the Stars there is a Divine habitation, wherein *Homer* imagined there was perpetual light.

That of all things *God* was the moſt ancient, becauſe not begotten; the World moſt beautiful, becauſe the work of GOD: and that darkneſs was before the light, were all the doctrines of *Thales* out of the ancient Learning. The laſt point whereof is found in *Orpheus* and *Heſiod*; whereupon the *Gentiles* that are commonly ſuperſtitious in following old faſhions and cuſtoms, do number their particular times by *nights*, not by days. It was the opinion of *Athenagoras* that all things were ordered and diſpoſed by the *higheſt intelligence*; of *Aratus*, that the Stars were made by *God*; and after the *Grecians*, of *Virgil*, that life was infuſed into things by the *Spirit of God*: and that Man was formed of *Clay*, is delivered by *Heſiod*, *Homer*, and *Callimachus*: Laſtly, *Maximus Tyrius* affirms, that by the common conſent of Nations, it is agreed, there is but one Supreme *God*, which is the cauſe of all things. And the memory of the finiſhing the Creation in ſeven days ſpace, was preſerved, not only among the *Greeks* and *Italians*, by the honour they gave to the *Seventh* day (as we learn out of *Joſephus*, *Philo*, *Tibullus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Lucian*) but among the *Gauls* and *Indians*, who all diſtinguiſhed their time, by Weeks, i. e. *ſeven days*; as we are taught by *Philoſtratus*, *Dion Caſſius*, *Juſtin Martyr*; and the moſt ancient Names of the days of the Week.

Moreover, the *Ægyptians* taught, that Man at the beginning led his life in all ſimplicity, being *naked* in his body, and not aſhamed; whence came *the Poets fiction of the golden age*, which was

was famous even amongſt the *Indians*, as *Strabo* relates: The Hiſtory of *Adam* and *Eve*, the *Tree*, the *Serpent*, was extant, as *Maimonides* tells us, among the Idolatrous *Indians* in his time: And that the ſame is found among the Pagans of *Pegu*, and the *Philippin* Iſlands, People of the ſame *India*, the name of *Adam* alſo among the *Brachmans*, and the account of 6000. Years being paſſed ſince the World was made, among thoſe of *Siam*; we have Witneſſes of our own age which aſſure us.

And that the lives of thoſe who ſucceeded the firſt Men, were prolonged to near a Thouſand Years, is reported by *Beroſus* in his *Chaldaicks*, *Manethos* in his *Ægypticks*, *Hieromus* in his *Phœnician* records, *Heſtiæus*, *Hecataus*, *Hellanicus* in the account they have left of the *Græcian* affairs, and among the Poets by *Heſiod.* Which is the leſs incredible, when we conſider, what is reported in the Hiſtories of very many Nations (particularly by *Pauſanius*, and *Philoſtratus* among the *Greeks*, and *Pliny* among the *Romans*) the bodies of Men were anciently far larger than they are now; as was found upon the opening of ſome of their Sepulchres.

Catullus alſo, after very many *Greeks*, reports, that *heavenly viſions* appeared unto Men before ſuch time, as they by the multitude and heinouſneſs of their crimes did deprive themſelves of that ſacred acquaintance and familiarity with *God*, and his miniſtring Spirits. The wild life of the *Gyants* which *Moſes* mentions, may be read almoſt every where in the *Greek*, and in ſome *Latin* Authors. 'Tis to be noted of *Noah*'s Flood, that in its Hiſtory the memory of almoſt all Nations ends; even of ſuch Nations as were un-

known till of late years: whereupon *Varro* called all the ſpace before, the hid or unknown time. But thoſe things we find wrapt up in the licentious fables of the *Poets*, are truly, that is agreeable to *Moſes*, delivered by moſt ancient Writers, ſuch are *Beroſus* of the *Chaldees*, *Abydenus* of the *Aſſyrians*, who mentions the ſending out of a Dove; as alſo *Plutarch* of the *Grecians*; and *Lucian*, who ſaith, that at *Hieropolis* in *Syria*, there is to be ſeen a moſt ancient Hiſtory both of *Noah*'s Ark, and of thoſe that were ſaved therein, both Men and Beaſts: The ſame Hiſtory was extant alſo in *Molo*, and in *Nicolaus Damaſcenus*: the latter of which had alſo the Name of the Ark; which is found likewiſe in *Deucalion*'s Hiſtory in *Apollodorus*. To which we may add, that in ſeveral parts of *America*, as in *Cuba*, *Mechoacana*, *Nicuraga*, there hath been preſerved the memory of the Flood; of the Creatures ſaved from periſhing in it; yea, of the Raven and the Dove; and the memory of the Flood it ſelf, even in that part now called the *Golden Caſtile*, is witneſſed by very many of the *Spaniſh* Nation.

In what part of the World men lived before the Flood, that note in *Pliny* of the building of *Joppe* before the ſame Flood doth teſtifie. That the place whereon *Noah*'s Ark reſted after the Flood was in the *Gordien Mountains*, it is manifeſt by the conſtant remembrance thereof with the *Armenians* from all Ages until this time. *Japhet* the Father of the *Europians*, whence came *Ion*, or as anciently they pronounced the word *Iavon* of the *Grecians*, and *Hammo* of the *Africans*, and ſuch like, are names which are found in *Moſes* his writings; as there are alſo foot-

ſteps

ſteps of the reſt, in the names of Nations and Countreys, obſerved by *Joſephus* and others. And then the endeavour of climbing up to Heaven, which of the Poets doth not mention? The burning of *Sodom* is ſpoken of by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, and *Solinus*. The moſt ancient uſe of *Circumciſion* hath been related by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Philo Biblius*; and now is retained by the poſterity of *Abraham*, to wit, not only the *Hebrews*, but alſo the *Idumæans*, *Iſmaëlites*, and others. A certain Hiſtory of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, agreeing with that of *Moſes*, was anciently extant in *Philo Biblius* out of *Sanchuniath*: in *Beroſus*, *Hecataus*, *Damaſcenus*, *Atrapanus*, *Epolemus*, *Demetrius*, and partly in that old Author of the aforeſaid *Orphean verſes*; and now alſo there are ſome remainders thereof in *Juſtin*, out of *Trogus Pompæus*: And almoſt in every one of theſe Authors aforenamed, there is ſome mention made of *Moſes* and his *Acts*: more particularly, how he was taken out of the Waters, and how the *two Tables* were given unto him of *God*, is plainly ſet down in thoſe *Orphean verſes* aforeſaid. Add unto theſe the teſtimony of *Polemon*; alſo what ſome of the *Egyptians* themſelves have recorded, to wit, *Manethon*, *Liſimachus*, and *Chærimon*, concerning the departing out of *Egypt*.

Neither will it enter into the heart of any wiſe Man to think that *Moſes*, (having ſo many enemies both of the *Egyptians*, and of other Nations, as the *Idumæans*, *Arabians*, and *Phœnicians*) would dare to divulge ought concerning the beginning of the World, and other ancient things, which either could be confuted by other more ancient Writings, or were repugnant to the com-

common received opinion in thoſe times; neither doubtleſs would he publiſh any thing touching the affairs in that Age, which could be juſtly gainſaid or diſproved by the teſtimonies of any then living. Of this *Moſes* there is mention made by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, and *Pliny*, by *Tacitus* alſo; and after all them, by *Dionyſius Longinus* in his Book concerning ſublimity of ſpeech. Likewiſe *Jamnes* and *Mambres* that reſiſted *Moſes* in *Egypt* are mentioned not only by the Authors of the *Talmud*, but by *Pliny* and *Apuleius*. Amongſt others the *Pythagoreans* ſpeak much of the Law it ſelf, which was given by *Moſes*, and of the Legal Rites. Both *Strabo* and *Juſtin* out of *Trogus* give an excellent teſtimony of the ancient *Jewiſh Religion* and *Juſtice*; inſomuch that here (me thinks) 'tis needleſs to produce any further teſtimony of ſuch things as are found, or have anciently been found conſenting with the Books of the *Hebrews*, touching *Joſhua* and others; ſeeing that whoſoever gives credit unto *Moſes*, (which to do no Man can without great impudency refuſe,) the ſame muſt needs confeſs, that there were indeed wonderful Miracles anciently wrought by God, which is the thing we here chiefly go about to declare.

As for the Miracles of after Ages, ſuppoſe of *Elijah* and *Eliſha*, and others, there is the leſs reaſon to think them counterfeit; becauſe in thoſe times *Judaa* was both more known than formerly; and upon the account of diverſity of Religion, was extreamly hated by their Neighbours. Who might have very eaſily blaſted the fame of ſuch Miracles, if they had been lies, as ſoon as it began to be ſpread abroad. The Hiſtory of *Jonah*, who lay three days in the Whale's belly,

belly, is to be read in *Lycophron*, and *Æneas Hazous*; ſave only that in ſtead of *Jonah*, they have put the name of *Hercules*: whom they ſo much honoured, that to make him appear the more illuſtrious, they were wont (as *Tacitus* and *Servius*, and others have noted) to report of him, whatſoever magnificent things they heard of in any other places.

Certain it is that *Julian*, who was an enemy of the *Jews*, as much as of Chriſtians, was forced, by the evidence of Hiſtory, to confeſs that ſuch Men lived amongſt the *Jews*, as were inſpired with the holy Spirit of *God*; and that Fire deſcended from Heaven upon the Sacrifices of *Moſes* and *Elias*. And verily 'tis well worth our obſervation, that amongſt the *Hebrews* there were not only grievous puniſhments appointed for ſuch Men as did falſly aſſume to themſelves the *Prophetical Function*, but alſo many Kings and great Men, that might have by that means purchaſed authority to themſelves, and likewiſe very many learned Men as was *Eſdras* and others, that never durſt arrogate to themſelves this dignity; nor any Man elſe, for divers Ages before the times of *Jeſus*.

SECT. XVI.

The ſame is proved by the Oracle and Predictions.

BUT more unlikely it is, that ſo many thouſand People ſhould be impoſed upon, in the avouching of a perpetual and publick Prodigy, (as

(as we may call it) to wit, the *holy Oracle*, which after a reſplendent manner ſhined from the breſt-plate of the *High-Prieſt*: The truth whereof was ſo ſtrongly believed by all the *Jews* to have continued until the deſtruction of the firſt Temple, that out of all doubt, their Anceſtors had certain knowledge concerning the ſame.

Like to this from *miracles*, there is another argument as forcible and effectual to prove *GOD's providence*, taken from thoſe *predictions of future events*, which among the *Hebrews* were many and manifeſt. Such was that prophecy of his being made Childleſs who ſhould attempt to reedifie *Jericho*: and that of the overthrow of the Temple at *Bethel* by a King, named *Joſiah*, foretold above Three Hundred Years before the thing came to paſs. So likewiſe the very name and chief acts of *Cyrus* foretold by *Eſaiah*: the event of *Hieruſalem*'s ſiege by the *Chaldeans*, foreſhown by *Jeremiah*: So alſo *Daniel*'s *prediction* touching the tranſlation of the Empire of the *Aſſyrians* unto the *Medes* and *Perſians*; then from them unto *Alexander* of *Macedon*, whoſe Empire ſhould afterward, in part, be divided among the Succeſſors of *Ptolomy* and *Seleucus*. And what evils alſo the *Hebrew* Nation ſhould ſuffer from all theſe, but eſpecially from *Antiochus Epiphanes*; which were ſo clearly foretold, that *Porphyry* who compared with theſe Predictions, ſuch *Grecian* Hiſtories as were extant in his time, could no otherwiſe tell how to ſhift them off, than by ſaying that thoſe things which were *fathered* upon *Daniel*, were written after ſuch time as they came to paſs; which is all one, as if one ſhould deny that that was written in the time of *Auguſtus* which hath been publiſhed in *Virgil*'s name,

name, and was always reputed for *Virgil*'s work. For there was never any more ſcruple made of the former amongſt the *Hebrews* than of this latter amongſt the *Romans*.

To theſe things we may add very many, and moſt famous Oracles among the People of *Mexico* and *Peru*; which foretold the coming of the *Spaniards* into thoſe Countries, and the calamities which ſhould thereupon follow. And hither alſo may be referred, not a few dreams, ſo exactly agreeing with the events, which both in themſelves and in their cauſes, were wholly unknown to them that dreamed; that they cannot, without great immodeſty, be referred to chance, or to natural cauſes: of which kind *Tertullian*, in his Book *Of the Soul*, hath collected illuſtrious examples, out of the moſt approved Authors. Spectres alſo or apparitions belong to this head, which have been not only ſeen, but heard to ſpeak: as thoſe Hiſtorians relate, who are the fartheſt from ſuperſtitious credulity; and is reported by Witneſſes of our own Age, who have lived in *China*, and in *Mexico*, and other parts of *America*. Nor are publick trials of innocence, by touching of red-hot Plow-ſhares, to be deſpiſed: which the Hiſtories of ſo many *German* Nations, and the Laws themſelves have remembred.

SECT.

SECT. XVII.

The Objection is anſwered, why Miracles are not now to be ſeen.

NEither is there any reaſon to object againſt ſuch Miracles, becauſe there are not the like to be ſeen in theſe days, neither the like *predictions* heard of; for 'tis a ſufficient proof of *Divine providence*, that ſuch things did come to paſs at any time: which being once granted, it will follow, that *God* may be believed with as much *providence* and *wiſdom*, now to cauſe them to ſurceaſe, as anciently he uſed the ſame. Neither ſtands it with reaſon, that thoſe Laws, which were given to the Univerſe concerning the natural courſe of things, and uncertainty of future events ſhould be lightly or always tranſgreſſed: but only at ſuch a time, when either there was a juſt cauſe, as when the worſhip of the true *God* was almoſt baniſhed out of the World, reſiding only in a little part thereof, to wit, in *Judæa*, where it neceſſarily was to be (as it were) fortified with new aids againſt the impieties wherewith it was compaſſed about; or when *Chriſtian Religion* (whereof by and by we ſhall ſpeak more particularly,) was firſt by *God*'s *decree* to be publiſhed thorowout the World.

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

And that now there is ſuch liberty in offending.

THere are thoſe who are wont to doubt of the Divine Providence, becauſe they ſee ſo much wickedneſs hath, like a Deluge, overſpread the face of the whole Earth: which Divine Providence, they contend, if there were any, would have made its chiefeſt buſineſs to reſtrain and ſuppreſs. But this is eaſily anſwered, conſidering that when *God* had created Man with freedom to do good and evil, reſerving abſolute and immutable goodneſs to himſelf, it had not been reaſonable to have put ſuch a ſtop to evil actions, as ſhould have been contrary to that liberty. Howbeit to keep Men from ſin, *God* uſeth every kind of means, which is not repugnant to the liberty aforeſaid. Such is the ordaining and publiſhing of the *Law*, together with inward and outward admonitions, both by *threats* alſo and *promiſes*. Nor doth he ſuffer the effects of wickedneſs to ſpread ſo far as they might have done: whence it is that all kind of government could never yet be ſubverted, nor the knowledge of *Divine Laws* utterly extinguiſhed or aboliſhed. Neither may *thoſe delinquences* which are permitted to be done amongſt Men, be thought altogether unprofitable; Since that (as before we have toucht) they may be uſed either for the puniſhment of other no leſs lewd tranſgreſſors; or for the chaſtiſement of ſuch as ſometimes wander from the way of vertue; or laſtly, to exact ſome worthy pattern of patience

patience and conſtancy from ſuch as have made
X good proficiency in the ſchool of *piety* and *vertue*. Laſtly, even they whoſe wickedneſs ſeems to be winked at for a time, are wont to pay dearly for it at laſt; and to be reckoned withal the more ſeverely, becauſe they have been long forborn: in ſo much that it is plain, they ſuffer what God would, who have done what He would not.

SECT. XIX.

Inſomuch that good Men are oppreſſed.

BUT, and if ſometimes there ſeem to be no puniſhment at all inflicted upon prophane offendors, and even ſome *good men* (which may occaſion the weak to be offended) are ſore oppreſſed by the inſolencies of the wicked, who many times make them not only to lead a wearieſome and miſerable *life*, but alſo to undergo a diſgraceful *death*: we are not preſently to baniſh from humane affairs the Providence of God, which hath been proved, as we have now ſaid, by ſtrong reaſons; but rather (as the wiſeſt ſort of Men have thought) we ſhould conclude and argue thus.

SECT.

SECT. XX.

The ſame Argument is retorted to prove that the Soul ſurvives the Body.

FOraſmuch as *God* hath an *eye* unto all Mens actions, and in himſelf is *moſt juſt*, ſuffering ſuch things to come to paſs as we ſee they do; therefore we muſt expect that there will be ſome future judgment after this life, to the end ſuch *notorious tranſgreſſions* may not remain unpuniſhed, nor *well deſerving virtue* be unrecompenced with due comfort and reward.

SECT. XXI.

Which is proved by Tradition.

FUrther, to confirm this *truth*, it muſt neceſſarily be admitted, that the *Souls* of *Men* do ſurvive their Bodies. Which moſt ancient *Tradition*, was derived from our very firſt Parents (for from whence elſe could it proceed?) unto almoſt all civiliz'd People; as is plain by *Homer*'s *Verſes*; and by *Philoſophers*, not only of the *Grecians*, but likewiſe the *Druides* in *France*, and *Brachmans* in *India*, and by thoſe relations alſo which *many Writers* have publiſhed concerning the *Egyptians*, and *Thracians*, and *Germans*. In like manner touching *God's judgment* to come after this life, many things we ſee were extant, as well among the *Grecians*, as alſo among the

Egyptians and *Indians*, as we learn out of *Strabo*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Plutarch*; whereunto may be added that old *Tradition* of the *Conſumption of the World by fire*, which was anciently found in *Hyſtaſpis* and the *Sibyls*, and now alſo in *Ovid* and *Lucan*, and the *Indians* of *Siam*: of which thing the Aſtrologers have noted this to be a ſign, that the Sun draws nearer and nearer to the earth. Yea, when the *Canaries*, *America*, and other foreign places were firſt diſcovered, this ſame opinion of the *immortality of Mens ſouls, and the laſt Judgment* was found among the Inhabitants there.

SECT. XXII.

Againſt which no contrary reaſon can be brought.

NEither can there any reaſon in nature be given to diſprove ſo ancient and common received *tradition*. For every thing that in this World comes to an end, periſhes either through the *oppoſition* of ſome more forcible *contrary agent*, as coldneſs in any ſubject, by reaſon of the more prevalent power and intention of heat; or through the ſubſtraction of that *ſubject*, whereupon it depends, as the quantity of the glaſs, when the glaſs is broken; or through the defect and want of the *efficient cauſe*, as light by the Sun-ſetting. Now none of all theſe can be ſaid to happen unto the ſoul of Man: Not the *firſt*, becauſe there is nothing that is *contrary to the Soul*; nay, it ſelf is of ſuch a peculiar nature, that

that it is apt to receive ſuch things as are *contrary* between themſelves, at the ſame time together, after its own, that is, after a *Spiritual and Intellectual* manner. Not the *ſecond*, for there is not any *ſubject* whereon the nature of the *Soul* hath any dependence: if there were, in all probability it ſhould be the *humane body*: but that this cannot be, it is manifeſt, becauſe when the *powers* and *abilities* of the Bodies are tired in their operations; the mind alone doth not by motion contract any *wearineſs*. Likewiſe the powers of the *Body* are impaired and weakned by the redundancy or exceſs of the *object*, as the ſenſe of ſeeing by the full ſplendor and bright face of the *Sun*: but the more excellent *objects* that the *Soul* is converſant about, as about *univerſals* and figures *abſtracted* from ſenſible matter, it receives thereby the more *perfection*. Again, the *powers* that depend upon the *Body* are only buſied about ſuch things as are limited to particular *time* and *place*, according to the nature and property of the *Body* it ſelf: but the *mind* hath a more noble *object*, and aſcends to the contemplation of that which is *infinite* and *eternal*. Wherefore then ſeeing that the *Soul* depends not upon the *Body* in its *operation*, neither doth it in its *eſſence*: for we cannot diſcern the nature of inviſible things otherwiſe than by their operations. Neither is the *third* way of corruption incident to the *Soul*, there being no *efficient cauſe* from which the *Soul* proceeds by a continual emanation. For we cannot ſay our Parents are ſuch a cauſe; ſince, when they are dead, their Children are wont to live. But if we will needs make *ſome cauſe*, from which the *Soul* proceeds, then we can imagine no other, ſave the firſt and *univerſal cauſe* of all things,

which as in respect of its power, is never *deficient*, so in respect of its *will* to be *defective*, that is, for the *Almighty to will* the extinction and destruction of the *Soul*, no Man can ever be able to prove.

SECT. XXIII.

Many Reasons may be alledged for it.

NAY there are many *strong Arguments* for the contrary, as namely, the *dominion* given unto Man over his own actions; the *natural desire* that is in him to be immortal; the force of conscience comforting the mind for well done actions, though very troublesome, and supporting it with a certain hope; and on the contrary, the *sting* of a gnawing conscience at the remembrance of the ungodly and wicked actions, especially when the Hour of Death approacheth, as if it had a sense of an *imminent judgment*. And this *gnawing worm* of conscience the most prophane wretches and wicked Tyrants have not been able oftentimes to extinguish in them, no not then when they most of all desired it, as divers Examples do testifie.

SECT.

SECT. XXIV.

Whence it follows, that the end of all ſhall be Man's happineſs after this life.

SEeing then the *Soul* is of a nature that in it ſelf hath no ground or *cauſe* of its own corruption; and ſeeing alſo that *God* hath given us many ſigns and tokens whereby we ought to underſtand, that it is *his will*, the ſoul ſhould ſurvive the body; what more *noble end* can be propounded to Man than *the ſtate of eternal happineſs*? which in effect is the ſame that *Plato*, and the *Pythagoreans* ſpake of, ſaying, that *it were good for man if he could become moſt like unto God.*

SECT. XXV.

Which to obtain, Men muſt get the true Religion.

NOW what this *happineſs* is, and how 'tis to be attained, Men may ſearch by probable *conjectures:* but if any thing concerning *this matter* be revealed by *God*, that muſt be held for a moſt certain and undoubted *truth*: which ſince *Chriſtian Religion* pretends to bring unto us above others, it ſhall be examined in the next Book whether or no Men ought to give credit thereunto, and aſſuredly build their faith thereon.

The Second Book OF THE TRUTH OF Chriſtian Religion.

SECT. I.

To prove the Truth of Chriſtian Religion.

IT is not our purpoſe in this Second Book to handle all the Points of *Chriſtianity*; but after our hearty Prayers made to *Chriſt* the King of Heaven, that he would grant us the aſſiſtance of his *holy Spirit*, whereby we may be enabled for ſuch a *Work*, we ſhall only endeavour to make it appear that the *Chriſtian Religion* it ſelf is moſt *true* and certain. Which I thus begin.

SECT. II.

Here is ſhewn that Jeſus lived.

THAT there was ſuch a Perſon as *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, who lived heretofore in *Judæa*, when *Tiberius* was Emperor of *Rome*, is not only moſt conſtantly profeſſed by all Chriſtians, who are ſcattered over the face of all the Earth: but acknowledged by all the *Jews*, who now are, or ever wrote ſince thoſe times. Nay, the very *Pagan* Writers, that is, ſuch as are neither of the *Jewiſh* nor *Chriſtian Religion*, namely, *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny* the younger, and many more after them, do teſtifie the ſame.

SECT. III.

And was put to an ignominious Death.

THAT the ſame *Jeſus* was nailed to a Croſs by *Pontius Pilate*, Governor of *Judæa*, is confeſſed alſo by all Chriſtians; though it might ſeem very diſgraceful to them, to be the Worſhippers of ſuch a Lord. The *Jews* alſo do the like; though they are not ignorant that upon this account they are very odious to Chriſtians, in whoſe Dominions they live: becauſe their Anceſtors were the Men, that moved *Pilate*, and perſwaded him to paſs the ſentence of Death upon *Jeſus*. The *Pagan* Writers alſo, now named, have delivered the ſame to Poſterity. Yea, the Acts of *Pilate* were

were extant a long time after, from whence this might have been proved; to which Christians never made their Appeal. For neither did *Julian* himself, nor any other adversaries of *Christianity* ever make doubt hereof: So that hence it appears, that there was never any more certain story than this; which (we see) may be confirmed, not only by the testimonies of some few Men, but also by the approbation of several Nations otherwise disagreeing and jarring among themselves.

SECT. IV.

Yet afterward was worshipped by prudent and godly Men.

ALL which though it be most true, yet we see how that throughout the remotest parts of the World he is worshipped as *Lord*; and that not in our days only, or those which are lately passed, but ever since the time that this was done; to wit, ever since the Reign of *Nero* the Emperor, when many People that professed this worship of *Christ*, and *Christian Religion*, were for that cause tortured and put to death, as *Tacitus* and others do witness.

SECT. V.

The cauſe whereof was, for that in his life time there were Miracles done by him.

NOW among ſuch as profeſſed *Chriſtianity*, there were always many Perſons, who were both judicious, and not unlearned. Such as (to ſay nothing now of the *Jews*) *Sergius*, Governour of *Cyprus*, *Dionyſius Areopagita*, *Polycarpus*, *Juſtinus*, *Irenæus*, *Athenagoras*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, with divers others; who almoſt all being brought up in other religions, and having no hopes of any Wealth or Preferment by *Chriſtianity*, yet became worſhippers of *this Man* that died ſo ignominious a death, and exhibited due honour to him as *God*: Of which no other reaſon can be given, but this alone; that they made diligent enquiry, as became prudent Men, in a matter of greateſt moment: and found that what was bruited abroad concerning the Miracles wrought by *Chriſt*, was true; and relied upon firm witneſſes. As the curing, and that with his word only, and before all the People, divers grievous and inveterate Diſeaſes; the reſtoring of Sight to him that was born blind; the multiplying of a few Loaves more than once, for the feeding many Thouſands, who could teſtifie the truth of it; the recalling of the Dead to Life again; and many more of the like kind. The report of which things had then ſuch a certain and undoubted original; that neither *Celſus*, nor *Julian*, when they wrote againſt Chriſtians, durſt deny there were

were ſome Prodigies done by *Chriſt*; and the *Hebrews* in the Talmudical Books do openly confeſs it.

SECT. VI.

Which Miracles were not wrought either by the help of Nature, or aſſiſtance of the Devil; but meerly by the Divine Power of GOD.

THAT theſe wondrous Works were not wrought by any Natural Power, it is manifeſt, by this very thing, that they are called *wonders* and *miracles*. Nor is it poſſible by the force of nature, that any grievous Diſeaſes and Infirmities ſhould be cured meerly by a Man's *voice*, or by the *vertue* of a *Touch*, and that even upon a ſudden. And if ſuch Works could have any way been aſcribed to a Natural efficacy, it would have been ſaid before now, either by thoſe that were profeſſed enemies of *Chriſt* while he lived upon Earth, or by thoſe that have been Adverſaries of his *Goſpel* ſince his death.

By the like Argument we may prove, that they were not jugling deluſions, becauſe they were done openly in the ſight of all the People: amongſt whom divers of the Learned ſort did malign and bear ill will unto *Chriſt*, not without envy obſerving all that he did. Add further, that the like Works were often iterated, and the effects thereof were not tranſitory but permanent and durable. All which being duly pondered, it muſt needs follow (as the *Jews* have confeſſed)

feſſed) that theſe Works proceeded from a more than Natural or Humane power, that is, from ſome Spirit either good or evil. That they proceeded not from any *evil Spirit*, may be proved, becauſe that the Doctrine of *Chriſt* (for the confirmation whereof theſe Works were wrought) was quite oppoſite and contrary to bad *Spirits*. For it prohibits the worſhipping of *evil Angels*, and diſſwades Men from all uncleanneſs of affections and manners, wherein ſuch *Spirits* are much delighted. And this is alſo plain, for that whereſoever the Doctrine of the Goſpel was received and eſtabliſhed, there followed the downfal of the worſhip of Dæmons, and of Magical Arts: and one God was worſhipped with a deteſtation of Dæmons; whoſe power and authority *Porphyry* acknowledges, was broken by the coming of *Chriſt*.

Neither is it to be thought that any wicked *Spirit* is ſo ignorant and fooliſh, as to effect and often bring to paſs things that are cauſes of its own hurt and diſgrace, and no way conducing to its honour or benefit. Beſides, it ſtands no way with the wiſdom or goodneſs of *God* himſelf to believe that he would ſuffer ſo harmleſs and innocent Men, ſuch as feared him, to be deceived by the *deluſion* of *Devils*: and ſuch were the firſt followers of *Chriſt*, as is plain by their innocent life, and by the many calamities which they endured for conſcience ſake.

But on the other ſide, if thou affirmeſt that thoſe works of Chriſt proceeded from ſome *good Spirits* which are inferiour to *God*; in ſo ſaying thou doſt confeſs that the ſame works were well pleaſing unto *God*, and did tend to the honour of his name; foraſmuch as *good Spirits* do nothing but

but what is acceptable and glorious unto *God*: To say nothing now of some of *Christ*'s works, which were so miraculous, that they seem to have *God* himself for the *author* of them, and could not have been done but by the immediate finger of an *omnipotent power*, as specially, the restoring divers Persons from Death unto Life again.

Now *God* doth not produce any Miracle, nor suffer any such Wonders to be wrought without just cause: For it becomes not a wise Maker of Laws to forsake and depart from his own *Laws*, unless upon some good and weighty reason: Now no other cause of these things can be given than that which was alledged by *Christ* himself, namely, that hereby his doctrine might be verified and confirmed. And doubtless they that were Spectators of his Works, could conceive no other reason thereof: among which since there were (as was said) many godly Men, piously and devoutly affected, it is horrible impiety to imagine, that *God* did work these things only to delude and deceive them. And this was one cause why very many of the *Jews* who lived about the time of *Jesus*, even such as could not be perswaded to relinquish or omit one jot of *Moses* his Law, such as those who were called *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, did notwithstanding acknowledge that this *Jesus* was a *Doctor* or *Master* sent from Heaven.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

Chriſt's Reſurrection proved by credible Reaſons.

BEſides the Miracles that *Chriſt* wrought to confirm his Doctrine, another like Argument may be taken from his wonderful *Reſurrection* to Life again, after that He was Crucified, Dead, and Buried.

For the *Chriſtians* of all Ages and Countries alledge the ſame, not only for a truth, but alſo as the moſt ſtrong ground and chiefeſt foundation of their *Faith*; which could not be, unleſs thoſe that firſt taught *Chriſtianity*, did perſwade their Auditors that the thing was ſo for certain; And yet they could not induce any wiſe Man to the belief hereof, unleſs they could verily affirm, that themſelves were eye-witneſſes of this matter. For without ſuch an ocular teſtimony, no Man in his wits would have given credit unto them; eſpecially in ſuch times, when to believe them was to expoſe themſelves to the greateſt miſchiefs and dangers. But that this was their conſtant aſſertion, both their own Books, and other Writings do teſtifie. For out of their Books it appears, that they appealed unto Five hundred Witneſſes that had beheld *Jeſus* after he was riſen from the Dead. Now it is not the faſhion of lyars and diſſemblers to appeal to ſo great a number of Witneſſes. Neither could it poſſibly ſo fall out that ſo many Men ſhould agree and conſpire together to bear falſe witneſs. Or ſuppoſe there had been no other witneſſes, ſave thoſe twelve known

known *Apoſtles*, the firſt publiſhers of *Chriſtian doctrine*, yet this had been ſufficient. No Man is wicked for nothing. And *honour* for their lying they could not expect, in regard that all kind of dignities and promotions were then in the hands of the *Pagans* or *Jews*, from whom they received nothing but reproach and ignominy. Neither could they hope for any *Wealth* and *Riches*, becauſe this profeſſion was oftentimes puniſhed with the loſs of goods and poſſeſſions: or if it was not; yet the *Goſpel* could not be taught by them, unleſs they omitted or neglected all care about worldly goods. Neither could the hope of any other *worldly advantage* move them to utter untruths; ſeeing that the very preaching of the *Goſpel* did expoſe them to labours, hunger, thirſt, ſtripes, and impriſonments.

To get *credit* and reputation only among their own Country-men was not ſo much worth, that they poor ſimple Men, whoſe life and doctrine was abhorrent from all pride, ſhould therefore run upon ſo great inconveniences. Neither again could they have any hope their doctrine would make ſuch progreſs, as to win them any fame; being oppoſed both by the nature of Man, which is intent to its own advantage, and by the authority of them, who then every where governed, unleſs they had been ſome way animated and incouraged by the *promiſe of God*.

To which we may add, that they had no reaſon to promiſe themſelves, that this fame, ſuch as it might prove, would be durable: ſince they expected (God on purpoſe concealing his counſel in this matter) the end of the whole World as nearly approaching; which both their own Writings, and the writings of thoſe Chriſtians that

that followed them, make moſt evident. It remains therefore that we ſay, if they did lye, it was for the defence of their Religion; which cannot with any reaſon be laid to their charge, if the thing be rightly conſidered. For either they did ſincerely believe that this *Religion* which they profeſſed was the *true Religion*, or elſe they were of a contrary mind. If they did not believe it to be *true*; nay if they thought not that it was abſolutely the beſt, they would never have made choice hereof, and refuſed other *Religions* far more ſafe and commodious. Nay further, though they conceived it to be *true*, yet they would not have profeſſed it, unleſs they had been fully perſwaded, that the profeſſion thereof was *neceſſary*; ſpecially, for that they might have eaſily foreſeen, and partly they could tell by experience what troops of Men would be expoſed to death for this *profeſſion*, which without juſt cauſe to occaſion was no better than plain robbery or murder.

But if we ſay, they believed that this *Religion* was true, and the very beſt, and by all means to be profeſſed, and that after the death of their *Lord and Maſter*: ſurely, that could no way be ſo, if their Maſters promiſe concerning his Reſurrection had deceived them, and not proved true. For that had been enough to make any Man in his wits disbelieve, even that which he had already entertained.

Moreover all Religions, and Chriſtianity more than any other, forbids lying in bearing falſe witneſs, eſpecially in divine things: wherefore they could not for the love of *Religion*, and that ſuch a Religion, be induced to tell untruths. Beſides, theſe Men were of an upright converſation; their life was ſpotleſs and unblameable even in the judg-

judgment of their adverſaries; who had nothing to object againſt them, ſave their ſimplicity, which of all other diſpoſitions is the moſt unlikely to forge a lye. Nay, there were none among theſe Primitive *Chriſtians* (whereof we ſpeak) who did not ſuffer grievous torments for profeſſing that *Jeſus was riſen*: and many of them were put unto moſt exquiſite pains of death for bearing teſtimony of the ſame. Now granting it to be poſſible, that a Man in his wits may be content to endure ſuch things, for ſome opinion which he hath conceived, and really believes in his mind; yet that for a falſhood, which he knows to be ſo, not only ſome one Man, but a great many Men, who are like to gain nothing at all by making that falſhood to be believed, ſhould conſent to ſuffer ſuch cruel torments, is a thing altogether incredible.

Now that theſe were not Mad-men, both their converſation and their writings do abundantly teſtifie. Likewiſe what is ſpoken of the firſt Apoſtles, may alſo be ſaid of *Paul*, who openly taught that he ſaw *Chriſt* ſitting in Heaven: who alſo was not inferiour to any in the *Jewiſh Religion*; nor might he have wanted dignities and preferments, if he would have followed the foot-ſteps of his *Fathers*.

Whereas on the contrary, by taking upon him the profeſſion of *Chriſtianity*, he became liable to the hatred and malignity of his kinsfolks, and and ingaged himſelf to undertake difficult, dangerous, and laborious travels through the World; and laſt of all to undergo a diſgraceful death and torment.

SECT. VIII.

Anſwer to the Objection, that the Reſurrection ſeems impoſſible.

SUCH and ſo great teſtimonies no Man can diſprove or gainſay, unleſs ſome will reply, that the thing it ſelf is impoſſible to be done: for ſo are thoſe things which imply a contradiction, as they ſpeak. Howbeit that cannot be affirmed of this matter. It might indeed, if one could ſay that one and the ſelf ſame Man lived and died at the ſelf-ſame time: But that a Man may be reſtored from death to life, eſpecially by the power and vertue of him who firſt gave life and being unto Man, I ſee no reaſon why it ſhould be accounted for a thing *impoſſible*.

Neither hath it been thought *impoſſible* by wiſe Men; for *Plato* writes that this was done to *Eris* an *Armenian*. And the like is related of a certain Woman by *Heraclides* a Philoſopher of *Pontus*, of *Ariſtæus* by *Herodotus*; and of another by *Plutarch*: all which, (whether true or falſe) do ſhew that in the opinion of learned and wiſe Men the thing was conceived to be poſſible.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

The Reſurrection of Jeſus being granted, the Truth of his Doctrine is confirmed.

NOW if it be neither impoſſible that *Chriſt* ſhould return to Life again; and it doth ſufficiently appear by great teſtimonies (wherewith *Rabbi Bechai*, a Maſter of the *Jews* was ſo convinced, that he acknowledged the truth of this thing) and this Chriſt himſelf alſo, as both his Diſciples and others confeſs, did publiſh a new Doctrine, as by a Divine commandment: truly it neceſſarily follows, that that Doctrine is true. For it doth not conſiſt with the divine Juſtice and Wiſdom to honour Him after ſo excellent a manner; who had committed the crime of falſifying in ſo weighty a matter. Eſpecially conſidering that before his Death He had foretold to his Diſciples, both his Death, and the kind of it, and his Reſurrection to Life again: adding this withal, that theſe things ſhould therefore come to paſs, that they might teſtifie and confirm the truth of his Doctrine.

And thus much for the Arguments which ariſe from the facts themſelves which were done: Let us proceed to thoſe which ariſe from the nature and quality of his Doctrine.

SECT. X.

Chriſtian Religion preferred before all others.

AND here truly we muſt ſay, that either all kind of *divine worſhip* whatſoever muſt be rejected, and utterly baniſhed from among Men, (which impiety will never enter into the heart of any one that can believe *there is a God* who takes care of all things; and withal conſiders how Man is endued with excellency of underſtanding, and liberty to chuſe what is morally good or evil; and upon that account is capable, as of reward, ſo of puniſhment;) or elſe this *Religion* is to be admitted and approved of for the *very beſt:* not only in regard of the outward teſtimonies of *works* and *miracles* aforeſaid; but alſo in conſideration of ſuch *inward* and *eſſential properties*, as are agreeing thereunto: namely, becauſe there is not, neither ever was there any other *Religion* in the whole World, that can be produced, either more *honourable* for excellency of reward, or more abſolute and *perfect* for precepts, or more *admirable* for the manner according to which it was commanded to be propagated and divulged.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

For excellency of Reward.

FOR to begin with the reward that is at the end propounded to Man, which though it be the laſt in fruition and execution, yet is it the firſt in his intention: If we conſider the inſtitution of the *Jewiſh Religion* by the hand of *Moſes*, and the plain or expreſs covenant of the *Law*, we ſhall find nothing there promiſed ſave the welfare and *happineſs of this life*: as namely, a fruitful Land, abundance of Corn and Victual, victory over their Enemies, ſoundneſs of Body, length of Days, the comfortable bleſſing of a hopeful Iſſue, and ſurviving Poſterity, and the like. For if there be any thing beyond, it is involved in dark ſhadows, or muſt be collected by wiſe and difficult reaſoning: Which indeed was the cauſe why many (in particular the *Sadducees*, who profeſſed themſelves to be followers and obſervers of *Moſes* his *Law*,) had no hope of enjoying any happineſs after this life.

As for the *Grecians*, who received their learning from the *Chaldæans* and *Ægyptians*, and had ſome hope in another World, after this life was ended; they ſpake thereof after a very doubtful manner; as appears by the diſputations of *Socrates*, by the Writings of *Tully*, *Seneca*, and others. And the Arguments they produce for it are grounded upon uncertainties; proving no more the happineſs of a *Man* than of a *Beaſt*: Which while ſome of them obſerved, it was no wonder if they imagined, that *Souls* were tran-

ſlated and conveyed from Men to Beaſts, and again from Beaſts into Men.

But becauſe this opinion was not confirmed by any teſtimonies, or grounded upon certain reaſon, (and yet it was undeniable that there is ſome end propoſed to Man's actions,) therefore others were induced to think, that *vertue* was the end or reward of Men's endeavours; and that a *wiſe Man* was happy enough, even though he were put into that tormenting braſen *Bull* made by *Phalaris*. Howbeit this fancy was juſtly diſtaſteful and improbable to another ſort, who ſaw well enough that Man's *happineſs*, eſpecially the higheſt, could not conſiſt in any thing that was accompanied with perils, troubles, torment and death (unleſs we have a mind to follow the ſound of words without the ſenſe of things:) Wherefore they placed Man's *chiefeſt happineſs* and end in ſuch things as were delightful and pleaſing to *ſenſe*. But yet this opinion alſo was diſproved and ſufficiently confuted by many, as being prejudicial to all *honeſty*, the ſeeds whereof are rooted in our hearts by *nature*: as alſo becauſe it debaſes Man, who is advanced to a higher pitch, and throws him down into the rank of Beaſts; which ſtoop down and pore upon nothing, but what is on the Earth.

With theſe and ſuch like uncertainties and doubtings was *Mankind* diſtracted at that time when *Chriſt* brought in the true knowledge of the *right end*: who promiſed unto his followers after their departure hence, a life, not only without death, without ſorrow and trouble, but attended with the higheſt joy and *happineſs*: and that not of one part of Man alone, to wit, of his *Soul*, (the felicity whereof after this life, partly by proba-

probable conjecture, and partly from tradition, was hoped for before) but alſo of his *Body* and *Soul* together. And this moſt juſtly; that the Body, which for the Divine Law, muſt often ſuffer grievances, torments and death, may not be without a recompence of *reward*. Now the reward and promiſed joys are not vile and baſe, as good chear and dainty fare, wherewith the more carnal ſort of *Jews* feed their hopes; or the embraces of beautiful Women, which the *Turks* expect to enjoy after death: for both theſe *ſenſualities* are proper to this frail life, at the beſt *being* but helps or remedies of mortality, the former of them conducing to the preſervation of every particular Man or Beaſt: and the latter for the continuation of the ſame creatures by *ſucceſſion* in their kind. But by the happineſs aforeſaid our *Bodies* ſhall be indued with conſtant vigour, agility, ſtrength, and more than a ſtar-like beauty. In the *Soul* there ſhall be an underſtanding without error, even of *God* himſelf and his Divine Providence, or whatſoever is now hid from us. And a *will* freed from all turbulency of paſſions, buſied chiefly about the ſight, the admiring and praiſing of the *Almighty*. In a word, all things much greater and better, than can be conceived by compariſon with the beſt and greateſt things in this World.

SECT. XII.

Anſwer to an Objection, that Bodies once Dead cannot be revived again.

BESIDES the doubt but lately anſwered, there is another *difficulty* objected againſt this *Doctrine* of the *Reſurrection*: namely, how can it be poſſible for *humane bodies* once diſſolved into duſt and corruption ever to be united and ſet together again? But this relies upon no reaſon. For ſince it is agreed among moſt Philoſophers, that howſoever things be changed, there remains ſtill the ſame matter, capable of divers Species or forms; who dare ſay, that either God doth not know in what places, though never ſo diſtant, the parts of that matter are, which belong to a humane Body; or, that He wants power to reduce them and ſet them together again; and do that in his Univerſe, which we ſee Chymiſts do in their Fornaces, and Veſſels, gather together and unite things of the ſame nature, though ſcattered and diſperſed? And that a thing alſo may return to the form of its original, though the ſpecies be never ſo much altered, we ſee an example in the nature of things; as in the Seeds of Plants and living Creatures.

Neither is that knot impoſſible to be unlooſed, which is tyed by many; concerning thoſe humane bodies which paſs into the nouriſhment of wild Beaſts or Cattle; who, being fed with them, become again the food of Man. For we muſt know, that the greateſt *portion* of ſuch things as we eat is not converted into integral

parts

parts of our bodies; but either turned into excrements, or humors of the body, as *Fleam* and *Choler*; yea, much of that which becomes our nourishment is wasted away either by diseases, or by inward natural heat, or by the Air about us. All which being so; he that so carefully regards all kinds of bruit Beasts, that none of them perish, the same *God* with a more special *providence* can also provide for humane bodies, that so much of them as becomes the food of other Men shall no more be converted into the *substance* of those that eat them, than are *poisons* or *physical potions*; and the rather, because it is in a manner naturally apparent, that humane flesh was not intended for Man's food. Or suppose it were not so, but something which hath made an accession to the latter body must be taken from it again; this will not make it not to be the same body: for even in this life there happen greater changes of particles, than this comes to. Yea, we see that a Butterfly is in a Worm; and the substance of Herbs or Wine in some very small thing; from whence they may be restored to their former just magnitude. Surely, since both these and many other things may without any inconvenience be supposed, there is no reason that the restitution of a Body dissolved should be reckoned among impossible things: which learned Men, *Zoroaster* among the *Chaldæans*, almost all the *Stoicks*, and *Theopompus* among the *Peripateticks*, believed not only might, but should be.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

The excellency of holy Precepts given for the worſhip of God.

THE ſecond thing wherein *Chriſtian Religion* excells all others that are, or ever were, or can be imagined, is the great *holineſs of Laws and Precepts*; both in thoſe things that appertain to the Worſhip of God, and in thoſe that concern other matters.

The holy Offices of the *Pagans* throughout almoſt the whole World, (as *Porphyry* ſhews at large, and the Navigations of our times have diſcovered) were full of cruelty; For it was the uſage, in a manner every where, to appeaſe the Gods, even with the Sacrifice of Humane Blood. Which cuſtom neither the *Greek* learning, nor the *Roman* Laws took away; as appears by what we read concerning the Victims made to *Bacchus Omeſtes* among the *Greeks*; and of a *Greek* Man and Woman, and a Man and Woman of *Gaul*, which were ſacrificed to *Jupiter Latiaris* at *Rome*: Thoſe moſt holy Myſteries alſo, whether of *Ceres*, or of *Liber Pater*, were as full as ever they could hold of filthineſs and obſcenity; as appeared when the ſecrets of this Religion were once laid open, and began to be divulged: of which *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others, have given us a large account. Thoſe *Feſtival* days alſo which were conſecrated to the honour of the *Gods*, were celebrated with ſuch ſpectacles, that grave *Cato* was aſhamed to be preſent at them. But in the *Jewiſh Religion* there was nothing unſeemly,

seemly, nothing dishoneſt or unlawful. Howbeit leſt the People that were prone to *Idolatry*, ſhould decline or fall back from the *true Religion*, it was loaded and burdened with many *precepts* concerning ſuch things as in themſelves were neither good nor evil; ſuch were the *ſacrificing* of Beaſts, the *Circumciſion*, an exact *reſt* from labour upon the *Sabbath*, and the prohibition of eating ſundry kind of *meats*; ſome of which cuſtoms the *Turks* have borrowed from them; adding further a prohibition for drinking Wine.

But the *Chriſtian Religion* teacheth, that as *God* is a moſt *pure Spirit*; So is he to be worſhipped with *pureneſs* of mind and *Spirit*, together with ſuch works as in their own nature without a *precept* are moſt laudable and honeſt. Thus the profeſſors thereof are not to circumciſe the fleſh, but their carnal *luſts* and *deſires*; not to keep Holy-day by a reſt from all kind of work whatſoever, but only from that which is unlawful. Nor are we to offer unto *God* the blood and fat of Beaſts; but if need be, even our own blood for the teſtimony of the *truth*. And what bounty or liberality ſoever we beſtow upon poor and neceſſitous *perſons*, to look upon it as given to *God* himſelf. We need not now abſtain from any kind of meat or drink, but may and ought to uſe them both with moderation, ſo that our health be not thereby impaired; ſometimes notwithſtanding ſubduing our Bodies to our minds by *faſting*, that they thereby may be the better fitted and prepared for more chearful *devotion*. But the chief point of this Religion, it is every where apparent, lies in a pious confidence: by which being compoſed to a faithful obedience, we rely wholly upon God, and ſtedfaſtly believe the

the performance of his promiſes. Whence there ariſes a good Hope, and a true Love both of God and our Neighbours: which makes us obey his Precepts, not in a baſe ſervile manner, for fear of puniſhment; but that we may pleaſe him, and have him, out of his great goodneſs, our Father and Rewarder.

Moreover we are taught to *pray*, not for riches or honours, or ſuch things as many times do hurt to thoſe that wiſh much for them: but firſt and chiefly that which tends to *God's glory*; then for our ſelves, ſo much of theſe periſhing things as nature deſires; leaving the reſt to Divine Providence: and ſatisfying our ſelves that all ſhall be well, which way ſoever things go. But for eternal things, it teaches us to pray with the moſt earneſt deſire, *viz.* for pardon of our ſins paſt, and the aſſiſtance of his Spirit in time to come; whereby being ſtrengthned againſt all terrors and allurements, we may conſtantly perſiſt in a pious courſe of life.

This is the true *worſhip* of *God* in *Chriſtian Religion*, than which nothing can be invented more worthy of Almighty God.

SECT. XIV.

Concerning the Offices of Humanity which we owe unto our Neighbour.

LIKE to theſe are the duties we owe unto our Neighbour. As for *Mahumet's Religion*, being hatcht in Wars, it breaths nothing but Wars, and is propagated by Wars, and Hoſtility.

Thus

Thus the Laws and Statutes of the *Lacedæmonians*, which among the *Greeks* were most applauded, even by the Oracle of *Apollo*; *Aristotle* notes, and blames them for it, were wholly directed to warlike force. And yet the same *Aristotle* maintains War against *Barbarians* to be natural: when, on the contrary, it is certain that Men were by nature made to friendship and society. For what is more unjust and unequal, than for single Murders to be punisht; but to vaunt and triumph in the slaughter of whole Nations, as in a glorious exploit? And yet, that so much celebrated *Roman* Common-wealth, how did it come by such a Name, but by Wars? which oft-times were manifestly unjust, as they themselves confess those were, against *Sardinia* and *Cyprus*. And truly generally, as the best Historians have committed to memory, most Nations thought robberies and plunders, without the bounds of their own Country, to be no disgrace at all to them. The exacting of revenge, *Aristotle* and *Cicero* make a piece of vertue: To behold Sword-players cut and slash each other, was one of the publick recreations of the *Pagans*: And nothing more ordinary than to expose their Children.

Among the *Hebrews* indeed there was a better Law, and more holy Discipline: but yet to a People of an impotent anger some things were connived at, and some things indulged. As a violent seizure upon the *seven* Nations, who had deserved it: with which not contented, they prosecuted all that differ'd from them with a cruel hatred; the signs and marks of which yet remain, in the prayers which they conceive against us Christians. But to prosecute him that hurt them, by rendring like for like; and to kill,

by

by their own private hands, him that had ſlain any of their Kindred, was permitted by the Law it ſelf. Whereas the Law of Chriſt forbids us to revenge any injury that is done us, either in words or deeds; leſt that wickedneſs which we condemn in others, we ſhould again allow by its imitation. It would have us do good to all, to the good indeed chiefly, but to the wicked alſo; after the Example of God, who beſtows the benefit of the Sun, the Stars, the Rain, the Winds and Showres, in common upon all Men whatſoever.

SECT. XV.

Of the Conjunction of Man and Woman.

THE Conjunction of Man and Woman, whereby Mankind is propagated, is a thing moſt worthy of the care of Laws. Which part of them it is no wonder the *Pagans* neglected, when they told ſuch lewd ſtories of the Whoredoms and Adulteries of the Gods which they worſhipped. Nay, the filthy and abominable uſe which one Man made of another, was defended by the example of their Gods. Into whoſe number, upon that account, *Ganymedes* was anciently put, and afterwards *Antinous*. Which flagitious wickedneſs is now moſt frequent among the *Mahometans*, and is thought lawful by the *Chineſes*, and other Nations. Yea, the Philoſophers of *Greece* ſeem to have made it their buſineſs, to find out an honeſt Name, for that moſt filthy thing.

Among

Among which *Greek* Philoſophers the moſt excellent commending community of Women; what did they do elſe, but turn a whole City into one common Brothel-houſe? A moſt unworthy thing: for ſince there is among ſome mute Animals a certain conjugal League or Covenant, how much more equal is it, that ſo holy a Creature as Man ſhould not be born of uncertain ſeed; with the extinction of all thoſe mutual affections, which are naturally between Parents and their Children.

The *Hebrew* Law indeed forbad all filthineſs; but both allowed one Man to have more Wives; and gave the Husband alſo a right, for any cauſe, to put away his Wife. Which the *Mahometans* at this day uſe; and the *Greeks* and *Latins* anciently with ſuch licence, that the *Lacedæmonians* and *Cato*, even lent their Wives to other Men, to uſe for a time.

But the moſt perfect Law of *Chriſt* penetrates to the very roots of Vices: and holds him who only attempts upon the chaſtity of any Woman, or looks laſciviouſly upon her, to be guilty before GOD, the Judge and Searcher of the Hearts, of that crime, which, though not acted yet, was deſired. And ſince all true friendſhip is perpetual and inſoluble, He would deſervedly have that to be ſuch, which, with the ſociety of minds, contains alſo a conjunction of Bodies. Which, without all doubt, is moſt profitable alſo for the right education of thoſe Children, that are the fruit of that Conjunction. Among the *Pagans*, ſome few Nations were content with one Wife; as the *Germans* and the *Romans*. Which the Chriſtians now follow; that the mind of the Wife being intirely given to the Husband, may be compenſated

penſated with an equal retribution: and the government of the Family may the better proceed under the direction of one Ruler: and divers Mothers may not bring in diſcord among Children.

SECT. XVI.

Touching the uſe of Temporal goods.

AND now to come to the uſe of thoſe things, which are vulgarly called *Goods*; we find that thefts were permitted by ſome *Paganiſh* Nations, as the *Ægyptians* and *Lacedæmonians*: and they that did not allow this to private Men, did publickly little elſe, as the *Romans*. Who muſt have returned to their Huts and Cottages, the *Roman* Orator ſaid, if they ſhould have been bound to reſtore to every body his own?

The *Hebrews* indeed had no ſuch cuſtom, yet their *Law*, that it might ſute it ſelf in ſome meaſure, to the humor of that People, permitted them to take *uſury* of ſtrangers; amongſt other things promiſing the reward of riches to them that obſerved the *Law*.

But the *Law* of *Chriſtianity* forbids not only all kind of *injuſtice* towards all ſort of Men, but alſo prohibits us to take any carking and exceſſive *care* for theſe tranſitory things, becauſe our mind is not able diligently and duly to attend unto two ſeveral matters; either of which are enough to take up the whole Man, and oftentimes draw us into contrary thoughts and counſels. Beſides, the exceſſive *care* both for getting and keeping

keeping riches is accompanied with a kind of bondage and anxiety, which ſpoils that very pleaſure, which is expected from riches. Whereas thoſe things that nature is content withal, are both few and eaſily acquired, without much labour or charge: yet if *God* beſtow any *overplus* upon us, ſo that we have ſomewhat to ſpare, we are not commanded to caſt the ſame into the *Sea*, as ſome *Philoſophers* unadviſedly have done; neither muſt we keep it unprofitably, or laviſh it out waſtfully; but rather therewith we ought to ſupply the wants and exigencies of other Men, either by giving, or by lending to *them* that would borrow: as becomes thoſe that look upon themſelves not as *Lords* and *Maſters* of the things they enjoy, but as *Stewards* and *Diſpenſers* under *God Almighty*, the *Father* and *Maſter* of all: knowing alſo that a benefit well beſtowed is a treaſure full of good hope; which neither the wickedneſs of Thieves, nor the variety of caſualties can in the leaſt diminiſh.

A rare example of which true and unfeigned *liberality* we find in the primitive *Chriſtians*, who ſent relief as far as from *Macedonia* and *Achaia* to the poor that lived in *Paleſtine*; as if the whole World had been but one Family. And here in the Law of *Chriſt* this caution is added, that the hope of being paid again, or getting credit by it, do not deflowr our bounty; whoſe beauty and grace is quite loſt with God, if it have reſpect to any thing but him. And that no Man may pretend for a cloak of his covetouſneſs, that he fears he may have need of all that he hath, when he grows old, or falls into any calamity; the Law promiſes a ſpecial care of ſuch Men as obſerve theſe Precepts. And to work a greater

 confi-

confidence in them, puts them in mind of the conſpicuous Providence of God in feeding the wild Beaſts and Cattle; and in adorning the Herbs and Flowres; and repreſents withal what an unworthy thing it would be, if we ſhould not believe ſo Good and ſo Powerful a God: but deal with Him, as if he were a bad Creditor; whom we will not truſt any further, than while we have a Pawn or pledge in our hands for our ſecurity.

SECT. XVII.

Of Swearing.

THERE are other *Laws* that forbid *Perjury*, but this Law of *Chriſt* will have us to refrain alſo from all kind of *ſwearing*, unleſs we be lawfully called thereunto upon neceſſity. Nay, enjoyns ſuch faithfulneſs and ſincerity in all our words, that there may be no need to exact an Oath of us.

SECT. XVIII.

Of other Matters.

MOreover there can nothing be found *commendable* and praiſe-worthy, either in the *Philoſophical* writings of the *Grecians*, or in the ſayings of the *Hebrews*, and other Nations, which is not contained in the *Precepts* of *Chriſtianity*,

anity, and that also established by Divine authority: as namely, concerning modesty, temperance, goodness, decent behaviour, prudence, the office of Magistrates and Subjects, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Man and Wife between themselves; and chiefly the eschewing those *vices* which among many of the *Grecians* and *Romans* went under the name and colour of *honesty*; such were the *desires* of honours and glory. And to be short, admirable is the *substantial brevity* of these *precepts*, comprehended in these few words, that we ought to *love God* above all things, and our *Neighbours* as our selves, that is, we must do as we would be done unto.

SECT. XIX.

Answer to an Objection touching the Controversies abounding among Christians.

BUT here peradventure some will object against this, which we speak concerning the *excellency* of *Christianity*, and tell us of the great diversity of opinions amongst *Christians*, whereupon there have sprung so many *sects* and *factions* as do now abound in the *Church*.

For answer whereunto, we may observe that the like *diversity* of opinions happens almost in all kind of *Arts* and *Sciences*, to wit, partly through the weakness of humane apprehension, and partly because Man's judgment is hindred and intangled by his affections. Howbeit this variety of opinions is contained within certain

bounds and limits: for there are ſome *common principles* agreed upon by all, and whereupon they ground their doubts. Thus in *Mathematicks* 'tis queſtioned, *whether a circle may be made quadrangular*: but not whether after the taking away of equal parts from equal, the reſidue will not remain equal. The ſame may be ſeen in *natural Philoſophy*, alſo in the *Art* of *Phyſick*, and in other Diſciplines. In like manner the *difference* of opinions that is amongſt *Chriſtians* doth not hinder the common conſent and agreement in thoſe *fundamental principles*, for which chiefly we have commended *Chriſtian Religion*; the certainty whereof appears in this, namely, that thoſe which out of mutual and deadly hatred ſought all the occaſion and matter of contention they could, durſt not for all that proceed ſo far, as to deny that theſe *Precepts* were commanded by *Chriſt*: no not even thoſe that refuſe to frame their lives and actions according to that rule.

But if there be any Man that will contradict theſe Principles, he is to be accounted like to thoſe *Philoſophers* that denyed *the Snow to be white*: For as theſe are confuted by ſenſe, ſo are thoſe convinced by the unanimous conſent of all *Chriſtian* Nations, and of the Books which were written by the firſt Chriſtians, and by thoſe next to the firſt, and by the Doctors which followed afterward; even thoſe that witneſſed their *faith* in *Chriſt* by their death. For in the opinion of any indifferent *Judge*, that muſt needs be reputed the *true doctrine* of *Chriſt*, which ſo many have ſucceſſively acknowledged and profeſſed; like as we are perſwaded that was the doctrine of *Socrates* which we read in *Plato* and *Xenophon*; as alſo that of *Zeno* the Philoſopher, which we find held by the *Stoicks*.

SECT.

SECT. XX.

The excellency of Christian Religion is further proved from the dignity of the Author.

THE third thing wherein we said *Christian Religion* excelled all others that are, or can be devised, was the *manner* whereby it was delivered and divulged. Where first we shall speak of the *Author.*

They that were authors of the wisdom among the *Grecians*, confessed that they could not affirm almost any thing for certain in their *doctrine*, because (quoth they) *truth lies hid in a deep Pit*; and our minds are no less *dazled* in the contemplation of divine things, than the eyes of an Owl in beholding the bright shining of the *Sun*: Besides, there was none among them but was notoriously guilty of *some vice* or other. For some were flatterers of *Princes*, others addicted to the impure love of Boys or Harlots; others gloried in a Dog-like impudence. And that they all envied one another, their scolding about words or matters of no moment is a great argument; as this is of their coldness in the worship of God, that even they who believed one God, set him aside, and not only worshipped others, but such as they knew were no *Gods*; making that only the *rule* of their *Religion* which was commonly received and practised in publick. Touching *the reward* of *godliness* they determined nothing for certain, as appears by the last (farewel) disputation of *Socrates* at his death.

Mahomet, the Author of a Religion that is ſpred very far, his own Followers do not deny, to have been a Man that abandoned himſelf to luſt, throughout his whole life: But gave no aſſurance at all, by which Men may be ſatisfied, that there ſhall indeed be ſuch a reward as he promiſed; conſiſting in banqueting and in venery; ſince they do not ſo much as pretend that his Body was raiſed to life again, but it lies buried at *Medina* to this day.

And as for *Moſes* the Founder of the *Hebrew* Law, though he was an excellent Perſon, yet he cannot be freed from all blame: ſince he could ſcarcely be perſwaded with much reluctance to undertake the Embaſſy, which God charged him withal to the King of *Egypt*: and expreſſed alſo ſome diſtruſt of *God*'s promiſe for bringing water out of the Rock, as the *Hebrews* themſelves confeſs. And he did ſcarce partake of any one of thoſe *promiſes* which by the Law he made unto the People, but was perplexed with continual mutinies and ſeditions in the Wilderneſs; neither was he permitted to enter into that bleſſed and pleaſant Land, ſo much deſired.

But *Chriſt* is deſcribed by his Diſciples, as a Perſon without all ſin; nor did others ever produce any teſtimony to prove that He was guilty of the leaſt: but whatſoever He preſcribed to others, He performed Himſelf. For there was nothing that God gave Him in charge, which he did not faithfully perform; being moſt ſimple and void of guile in his whole life; moſt patient of injuries, nay, of cruel torments, as He ſhewed in ſuffering even the puniſhment of the Croſs; moſt loving and kind to all Men, even to his Enemies; yea, thoſe Enemies who put Him to death:

on

on whom he had such compassion that he beseech-ed God to forgive them.

As for the *reward* which he promised unto his Disciples, it is both said, and proved by undoubted arguments, that He himself is made partaker thereof after a most eminent and excellent manner. For after *he* was *risen* from the dead, there were many that beheld, and heard, and handled, and felt *Him*: He also ascended up into *Heaven* in the sight of his *Twelve Disciples*; where He obtained the highest *power*, as was evident in that according to his *promise* made at his departure, he endued them that were his *Followers* with ability to speak those Languages which they had never learnt, and with other wonder-working Powers: which will not let us doubt, either of his faithfulness, nor of his Power to bestow upon us the reward which he hath promised. And thus we have shewn how that this *Religion* is more excellent than others, in regard that *Christ* the Author of it hath *himself* performed what he commanded; as also in his *own person* obtained, and already enjoyeth the *happiness* that he promised.

SECT. XXI.

Also from the wonderful spreading of this Religion.

LET us in the next place descend to the *effects* of this *doctrine* brought by him to the World: which, if they be well weighed, will appear to be such, that if God have any care of humane

affairs, this doctrine cannot but be believed to be Divine. It was very agreeable to Divine Providence, to make that which was beſt, to be of the greateſt and largeſt extent. Now ſuch was the ſucceſs of the Chriſtian Religion; which, we ſee publiſht and taught through all *Europe*, not excepting the moſt Northern Provinces: and no leſs through all *Aſia*, even the Iſlands of it in the Sea: through *Egypt* alſo and *Æthiopia*, and ſome other parts of *Africa*: And laſtly, through *America*. Nor is this only done now, but was ſo anciently, as is witneſſed by the *Hiſtories* of all times, by the Books of *Chriſtians*, the acts of *Synods*, and by that old Tradition at this day preſerved among the *Barbarians* concerning the Travels and Miracles of *Thomas*, *Andrew*, and other *Apoſtles*. *Clemens*, *Tertullian*, and ſome *Ancients* beſides, have noted how far the *name* of *Chriſt* was known amongſt the *Britains*, *Germans*, and other moſt remote Nations in their times. And certainly there is no other *Religion* comparable hereunto for ample and large extent. *Paganiſm* indeed is one name, but cannot be ſaid to be *one Religion*; ſince that it was neither agreed upon by the *Profeſſors* thereof what *one thing* they ſhould *worſhip*; but ſome adored the *Stars*, others the *Elements*, and a third ſort reverenced their *Cattel*, others ſuch things as have no *ſubſiſtence*: Nor was this worſhip performed by vertue of the ſame Law, nor from any common Maſter.

The *Jews* indeed are diſperſed and ſcattered up and down, yet remain one *people*. Howbeit their *Religion* had never any notable growth or increaſe after *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion: and their *Law* was not ſo much made known by them, as by *Chriſtians*.

Then

Then for *Mahumetanism*, it is possessed of Land enough, but 'tis not alone: for *Christian Religion* is also professed in the same Countries; where, in some places there are greater numbers of Christians than of *Turks*: who, on the contrary, are not to be found at all, in most parts where Christianity is planted.

SECT. XXII.

Considering the meekness and simplicity of them that first taught this Religion.

IT follows that we consider by what means this *Christian Religion* had its augmentation and increase, that *therein* it may be comparable, and preferred before others. We see it commonly true of most Men, that they will easily follow the *examples* of Kings and Potentates what way soever they go; specially if *Law* and Penalties compel them to it. Hereby were the *Religions* of the *Pagans*, and of *Mahomet* propagated. But *they* that first taught the *Christian Religion* not only wanted all civil power and authority, but were of *mean* condition, no better than poor Fishermen, Weavers, and the like. Yet by such Mens pains and industry, *that doctrine*, within the space of Thirty Years, or thereabouts, was published not only throughout all the parts of the *Roman Empire*, but also among the *Parthians* and remote *Indians*.

Nor was it thus only in the beginning; but for almost *three* whole Ages together, this Religion was so promoted by the endeavours of private

vate Men; without any threatnings; without any worldly thing to invite Men to it; yea, against the will and the most violent opposition of those who then had the Imperial Power; that before *Constantine* professed Christianity, this was become, very near, the greatest part of the *Roman* World.

Amongst the *Grecians* that taught morality, divers there were that commended themselves also very much by their skil in other Arts. As the *Platonists* were famous for the study of *Geometry*, the *Peripateticks* for the History of *Plants* and living Creatures, the *Stoicks* for *Logical* subtilty, the *Pythagoreans* for knowledge of *numbers* and *harmony*: many also were admirable for *eloquence*, as *Xenophon*, *Plato*, and *Theophrastus*. But the first *Doctors* and Teachers of *Christianity* were endued with no such *art*, but used the plainest *language*, without inticing words; only after a bare manner or naked form of speech *pronouncing* their precepts, promises, and threatnings. Which having no efficacy in themselves proportionable to such a progress as Christianity made, we must needs confess, it was either attended by Miracles, or by *God*'s secret *power* assisting the business, or *both* together.

SECT.

SECT. XXIII.

What great impediments there were that might terrifie Men from the embracing or the professing hereof.

HEreunto may be added another thing considerable, namely, that they who received Christianity from those Teachers had not their minds void of a certain form and rule of Religion; and so were not by that means ductile and easie to be drawn, as they were who first received the *Paganish* worship and *Mahomet*'s Law: much less was their minds prepared for it, by some antecedent institution; as the *Hebrews* by Circumcision, and the knowledge of one God, were made fit to accept the Law of *Moses*: But quite contrary were filled with Opinions and Customs, which are a kind of another nature, repugnant to those new Institutions; being educated, *viz.* and confirmed by the authority of Laws and of their Parents, in the *Paganish* Religion, or the *Jewish* Rites.

Besides this, there was another *impediment*, to wit, the most grievous evils, which they who undertook Christianity, must expect to suffer, or had reason to fear, upon that account. For seeing that humane nature abhors such *evils*, it must needs follow that the *causes* of those *evils* cannot be admitted of without much difficulty. A long time were the *Christians* deprived of all honours and dignities; and likewise much afflicted with divers penalties, with confiscation of goods and banishments: which notwithstanding

were

were all but *flea-bitings*, for they were condemned to dig in the Mines; and to ſuffer torments, than which more cruel could not be deviſed.

And ſuch multitudes of them were put to death, that there never was a greater number of Men at one time ſwept away and devoured, either by *famine*, or *peſtilence*, or *war*, as the *writers* of thoſe times do teſtifie. Their manner and kind of death alſo was not *ordinary*, but ſome were buried alive; others crucified; others endured puniſhments of the like kind, which cannot be read or thought of without the greateſt horror: and yet this ſavage cruelty, which continued without much intermiſſion (and that not every where) till almoſt the time of *Conſtantine*, in the *Roman* World, and in other places endured longer; was ſo far from diminiſhing the number of Chriſtians; that quite contrary, their Blood might be called the Seed of the Church: there ſprang up ſtill ſo many, in the room of thoſe that were cut off.

Now let us herein alſo compare other Religions with Chriſtianity. The *Greeks* and the reſt of the *Pagans*, who are wont to magnifie their own things above meaſure; yet give us in but a very ſhort Catalogue of ſuch as ſuffered death for the ſake of their Doctrine. Some *Gymnoſophiſts*, *Socrates*, not many more, are all they can number. And in thoſe eminent Men, it can ſcarce be denied, but that there might be ſome deſire of tranſmitting their fame to Poſterity, which had a hand in the buſineſs. But amongſt thoſe *Chriſtians* that ſuffered *martyrdom* for their *faith*, there were very many of mean rank, of the common ſort of People, ſuch as were ſcarce ever taken

taken notice of, or known to their Neighbours that lived hard by them. There were Women alſo, Virgins, and young Men; ſuch as had no deſire, nor any probable hope of getting renown in future times by their ſufferings: According as in the Books of *Martyrs*, we find the Names but of a few in compariſon of the whole *number* of thoſe that were put to death, who are only regiſtred *in groß*.

To which we muſt add, that by a ſmall compliance and ſimulation, ſuppoſe by caſting a little Frankincenſe upon the Altar, moſt of them might have freed themſelves from ſuch puniſhments. Which cannot be ſaid of thoſe Philoſophers; who, whatſoever they might think ſecretly in their hearts, in all their apparent actions, conform'd themſelves to the vulgar cuſtomes. So that, to have ſuffered death for the honour of God, cannot well be attributed to any other, but only the *Jews* and Chriſtians. And not to the *Jews* neither, after the times of *Chriſt*; nor before them, but to a few, if they be compared with Chriſtians. More of which ſuffered for the Law of *Chriſt* in ſome one Province; than the *Jews* ever did; whoſe patience in this kind, may all very near be reduced to the times of *Manaſſes*, and of *Antiochus*.

Wherefore, ſeeing Chriſtian Religion in this particular alſo ſo vaſtly excells all other, it ought juſtly to be preferred before them. And from ſuch a multitude of all kinds, and ſexes of People, diſtinguiſhed by ſo many ſeveral places and ages, as did not ſtick to dye for this Religion; we may well gather, there was very great cauſe of ſuch conſtancy: which cannot be imagined to be any

any other; but the Light of Truth, and the Spirit of GOD.

XXX SECT. XXIV.

Answer to them that require more forcible Reasons.

FInally, if any yet be not satisfied with these *arguments* abovesaid, but desire more forcible *reasons* for confirmation of the *Christian Religion*; let such know, that according as things are divers, they must also have divers kinds of Proofs. Thus is there one way in *Mathematicks*, another in *Physicks*, a third in matters of advice and counsel, and lastly another kind, when a *matter of fact* is in question: wherein verily we must rest content when the *testimonies* are free from all suspicion of untruth. Otherwise down goes not only all the use of *history*, and a great part of the *art* of *Physick*, but all the piety also that ought to be between Parents and Children, which cannot be known other ways. And indeed it is the pleasure of *Almighty God* that those things which he would have us to *believe* (so that the very belief thereof may be imputed to us for obedience) should not so evidently *appear*, as those things which are apprehended by *sense* and plain *demonstration*; but only be so far forth *revealed* as may beget *faith*, and a perswasion thereof in the hearts and minds of such as are not *obstinate*: That so the Word of the *Gospel* may be as a *touchstone*, whereby Mens dispositions may be tried whether they be curable or not. For seeing

seeing these *arguments*, whereof we have spoken, have induced so many honest, godly, and wise Men to approve of this *Religion*, it is thereby plain enough that the fault of other Mens *infidelity* is not for want of sufficient *testimony*, but because they would not have *that* to be had and embraced for *truth*, which is contrary to their affections and desires: It being, that is, an hard matter for them to make no great account of honours, and other worldly advantages; which they must do, if they receive what Christ hath taught, and so become ingaged to observe his Precepts. Which is discovered to be true by this very thing; that they take many other Historical Narrations to be true; which notwithstanding appear to be so meerly by authority: and not by any such foot-steps of them remaining at this day, as the History of *Christ* hath; partly in the confession of the *Jews*, who are now in being, and partly in those things, which are every where found in the Assemblies of Christian People; of which it must needs be granted there was some cause.

Lastly, seeing the long *duration* or continuance of *Christian Religion*, and the *large extent* thereof can be ascribed to no *humane power*, therefore it must be attributed to *miracles*: or if any deny that it came to pass through a *miraculous* manner; this very getting so great strength and power without a *miracle*, may be justly thought to surpass any *miracle*.

XXX

The

The THIRD Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

To prove the Authority of the Books of the New Covenant.

AFTER that a Man is once perſwaded by the *reaſons* aboveſaid, or is induced by any other *arguments* to believe that this *Religion* which *Chriſtians* profeſs is the *trueſt*, and abſolutely the *beſt*; if he deſire to learn all the parts thereof, then muſt he have recourſe unto the moſt *ancient writings* that contain the ſame *Religion*, which commonly we call the Books of the *New* Teſtament, or rather new *Covenant*.

For he is very unreaſonable, who denies this Religion to be contained in thoſe Books, as all Chriſtians affirm. Since it is but equity to believe

every Sect; be it good, or be it bad; when it ſays its opinions are to be found in ſuch or ſuch a Book: as we believe the *Mahometans*, that the Religion of *Mahomet* is contained in the *Alcoran*.

Foraſmuch then as we have before proved that the *Chriſtian Religion* is moſt *true*; and it is manifeſt withal that it is contained in theſe Books, if there were no other ground, yet this alone is ſufficient to prove and avouch the *Authority* of thoſe Books.

But if any body requires a more particular demonſtration of it, I muſt firſt lay down this Rule, which all indifferent Judges will allow; that it is incumbent upon him, who will impugn the authority of any writing received for many Ages, to produce Arguments which prove that Writing to be falſe: which if he cannot do, that Book is to be defended, as in poſſeſſion of its Authority.

SECT. II.

Here is ſhewn that ſuch Books were written by the Authors, whoſe names they have prefixed.

WE ſay then that thoſe Books which are not in queſtion amongſt *Chriſtians*, and carry before them a certain Name, are the very *Works* of thoſe Authors whoſe names they bear; Becauſe thoſe *primitive Fathers*, *Juſtin*, *Irenæus*, *Clemens*, and others after them do quote

quote thoſe Books under theſe very names. As alſo becauſe *Tertullian* witneſſeth that there were *Original Copies* of ſome of thoſe *Books* extant in his time. And beſides, all the *Churches* received thoſe Books for *authentical*, before there were any common publick Meetings. Neither did ever the *Pagans* or *Jews* raiſe any controverſie about this, as if theſe were not the works of thoſe Men, whoſe they were ſaid to be: but *Julian* himſelf plainly confeſſeth that thoſe were the writings of *Peter* and *Paul*, *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, which *Chriſtians* under thoſe names have read and received. For as no Man in his wits can doubt that thoſe Writings, which go under the names of *Homer* & *Virgil*, are truly theirs, becauſe the one hath been ſo long time received among the *Latin*, and the other among the *Greek Authors*: in like manner, it were more abſurd to bring the *Authors* of thoſe *Books* in queſtion, which are granted almoſt by all the *nations* in the world.

SECT. III.

Some Books were anciently doubted of.

IN the Volume of the *New Covenant*, there are ſome Books indeed now received, which were not ſo received from the beginning, as the ſecond *Epiſtle* of St. *Peter*, that of St. *James* and *Jude*, two of St. *John* the Elder, the *Revelation*, and the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*: Yet this is certain, that they were acknowledged by many Churches; which appears ſufficiently from hence, that the ancient Chriſtians uſe their

Teſtimonies as Sacred: Which makes it credible that ſuch *Churches* as from the beginning had not thoſe Books, either were ignorant of them, or doubtful: Yet afterward when they were better informed touching the ſame, they admitted them into the *Canon* (as we now ſee) according to the example of other *Churches*.

Neither can any good reaſon be given why any Man ſhould counterfeit thoſe Books, ſince there is nothing compriſed in them, neither can ought thence be collected which is not abundantly expreſſed in other *Books* unqueſtioned.

SECT. IV.

The Authority of ſuch Books as have no Titles, is proved from the quality of the Writers.

AND here let no Man miſtruſt the *verity* of the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, becauſe the Writer of it is unknown; nor doubt of the two *Epiſtles* of S. *John* and the *Revelation*, becauſe ſome Men do queſtion, whether the *Author* of them was *John* the Apoſtle, or ſome *other* of that name? For the *name* is not ſo much to be regarded as the *quality* or *condition* of Writers. Hence it is that we receive many Books of *Hiſtory*, whoſe *Authors* are to us unknown; As that concerning the *Alexandrian* War by *Cæſar*: becauſe we may perceive that whoſoever writ the ſame, lived in thoſe times, and was preſent when the things were done. In like manner it ought

ought to ſuffice us, that whoſoever wrote the *Books* we ſpeak of, both lived in the *primitive* Age, and were endued with *Apoſtolical* gifts. For if any body will ſay, that theſe qualities might be feigned, as the very Names might be in other Writings; he ſays that which is not credible, *viz.* that they who every where preſs the ſtudy of truth and piety, would for no cauſe at all make themſelves guilty of the crime of forgery: which is not only deteſtable among all good Men, but by the *Roman Laws* was to be puniſhed with death.

SECT. V.

Theſe Pen-men writ the Truth, becauſe they had certain knowledge of what they writ.

THIS therefore muſt be allowed, that the *Books* of the *New Covenant* were written by thoſe *Authors*, whoſe Names they bear, or by ſuch as bear ſufficient witneſs of themſelves: To which if we farther add, that they were alſo well acquainted with the *matters* whereof they wrote, and had no purpoſe to *lye* or *diſſemble*, it will follow that the *things* which they committed to writing were both *certain* and *true*, becauſe every untruth proceeds either from *ignorance*, or from a *wicked deſire* to deceive.

As touching *Matthew*, *John*, *Peter* and *Jude*, they were all of the *ſociety* and *fellowſhip* of thoſe *Twelve* whom *Jeſus* did chuſe to be *witneſſes* of his *Life* and *Doctrine*; ſo that they could not want notice of thoſe things which they did re-

late. The ſame may be ſaid of *James*, who was either an *Apoſtle*, or as ſome think, the next a-kin to *Jeſus*, and by the *Apoſtles* conſecrated *Biſhop* of *Hieruſalem*. *Paul* alſo could not erre through lack of *knowledge*, about thoſe Points which he profeſſeth were revealed to him by *Jeſus* himſelf reigning in Heaven; nor could he, or *Luke* either, who was an inſeparable companion to him in his travels, be deceived about thoſe things which were done by himſelf. This *Luke* might eaſily know the *certainty* of thoſe things which he writ concerning the *life* and *death* of *Jeſus*: For he was born in the places next adjoyning to *Paleſtina*; through which Countrey when he travelled, he ſaith he ſpake with ſuch perſons as were *eye-witneſſes* of the things that were done. For doubtleſs beſides the *Apoſtles* with whom he had familiarity, there lived many others at that time who had been *cured* by *Jeſus*, and had ſeen him both *before* his Death and *after* his Reſurrection.

If we will give credit to *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* in thoſe things which happened a long time before they were born, becauſe we are confident that they diligently enquired into the *truth* thereof; how much more ought we to believe *this Writer*, who ſaith that he received all the things which he relates from them that had *ſeen* the ſame.

It is credibly reported of *Mark*, that he was a conſtant companion with *Peter*, ſo that whatſoever he writ are to be lookt upon as dictated by *Peter*, who could not be *ignorant* thereof. Beſides, the ſame things that he writes are almoſt all extant in the Writings of the *Apoſtles*. Neither could the *Author* of the *Apocalypſe* be deceived or deluded in thoſe *Viſions*, which he ſaith were

ſent

ſent unto him from *Heaven*. Nor he that writ the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews* erre in thoſe things which he profeſſeth, either to be *inſpired* into him by the Spirit of *God*, or elſe *taught* him by the *Apoſtles*.

SECT. VI.

As alſo becauſe they would not lye.

THE other reaſon we ſpake of to prove the truth of the ſaid Holy Writers, becauſe they had no *will* to tell an untruth, is twiſted with that which we handled above, when in general we proved the *truth* of *Chriſtian Religion*, and of the *hiſtory* of the Reſurrection of *Chriſt*.

Thoſe that will accuſe any Witneſſes for the *pravity* of their *will*, muſt produce ſomething by which it may be thought credible, their will might be diverted from uttering the *truth*: but this cannot be averred of the ſaid *Authors*. For if any do object and ſay, that they acted in their own cauſe, and did their own buſineſs; we muſt ſee why this ſhould be thought *their* cauſe and intereſt. Not that they might get any thing by it in this World, or thereby avoid any danger: when for the ſake of this profeſſion, they both loſt all the goods of this World, and ventured upon all manner of dangers. This therefore was not *their* cauſe and intereſt, but only out of reverence to God: which ſure doth not perſwade Men to lye; eſpecially in ſuch a buſineſs, whereupon depends the everlaſting Salvation of Mankind.

Such an impious piece of villany we cannot believe they could be guilty of, if we conſider either their Doctrines, every where moſt full of piety; or their life, which was never yet accuſed of any wicked deed: no not by their greateſt Enemies, who objected nothing to them, but their want of learning and unskilfulneſs; which did not qualifie them ſure for inventing falſhoods. And indeed, if there had been the leaſt ſpice, as we ſpeak, of fraud and cheating in them, they would not themſelves have recorded their own faults, and preſerved the memory of them: as of their all forſaking their Maſter when he was in danger, and *Peter*'s denial of him three times.

SECT. VII.

A Confirmation of the Fidelity of theſe Authors from the Miracles which they wrought.

ON the other ſide *God* himſelf gave illuſtrious teſtimonies of their *Fidelity* by working *wonders*, which either they or their Diſciples with great boldneſs publickly avouched, adding alſo the names of the *perſons*, places, and other circumſtances: So that the *truth* or *falſhood* of their aſſertion might eaſily have been diſcovered by the *inquiſition* of the *Magiſtrate*.

Amongſt which it is worthy our obſervation, which they have moſt conſtantly delivered, both concerning the uſe of Tongues which they had never learned, among many thouſand Men; and

their

their *curing* the *diſeaſes* of the body upon a ſuddain in the ſight of the People. Neither were they any whit diſmayed with fear either of the *Jewiſh Magiſtrates* of thoſe times, whom they knew to be moſt maliciouſly ſet againſt them; or of the *Romans*, who were far from having any good will to them, and, they were ſure, would lay hold on any thing on which they might ground a charge of their being *inventors* of a new *Religion*: and yet neither *Jews* nor *Pagans*, in the times immediately following, durſt ever deny, that *wonders* were wrought by thoſe Men. Yea, the Miracles of *Peter* are mentioned by *Phlegon* in his Annals, who lived under *Adrian* the *Emperor*. Moreover the *Chriſtians* themſelves in thoſe Books that contain a *reaſon* of their *faith*, which they exhibited to the *Emperors*, to the *Senate*, and to the *Governors*, do relate theſe things as moſt manifeſt and unqueſtionable *truths*: yea, they openly report that there continued a *wonderful vertue* of working ſtrange effects at their *Sepulchres* for ſome Ages after their Death; which if it had been *falſe*, they knew that to their *ſhame* and *puniſhment* the *Magiſtrates* could have confuted it very eaſily. But there were ſuch multitude of Miracles wrought at the Sepulchres I ſpoke of, and ſo many Witneſſes of them; that they extorted even from *Porphyry* a confeſſion of it.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

The Truth of the Writings confirmed from hence, that many things are found there which the event hath proved to be divinely revealed.

THESE things ought to ſuffice, but there are other Arguments which we may heap upon theſe, to prove the *truth* and fidelity of theſe *Authors Writings*. For many things are therein *foretold*, which were *impoſſible* for Men by their own power to know or bring to paſs: yet we ſee the *truth* thereof wonderfully confirmed by the *event*.

Thus it was *foretold* that this *Religion* ſhould upon a ſudden have a large and ample *increaſe*; that it ſhould *continue* for ever; and though it were rejected by moſt of the *Jews*, yet ſhould it be imbraced by the *Gentiles* Thus likewiſe was *foretold* what hatred and ſpight the *Jews* would bear againſt them that profeſſed this *Religion*, and what grievous Perſecutions they ſhould undergo: The ſiege alſo and *deſtruction* both of *Hieruſalem*, and of the *Temple*, together with the miſerable *Calamities* of the *Jewiſh* Nation.

SECT. IX.

As also from God's care in preserving his People from false writings.

BESIDES this, if it be granted that *God* out of his *providence* takes care of humane affairs, specially such as belong to his *honour* and worship; then it cannot be that he should suffer so great a *multitude* of Men, who had no other design but to worship God after a holy manner, to be cheated with lying Books. And forasmuch as since the time that so *many Sects* have sprung up in *Christianity*, there hath not been *one* that received not either *all* or the *most* of those *Books*, (excepting some few that contain no singular matter differing from the rest) it is a great argument that no material thing could be objected against these *writings*; specially since the said *Sects* were so partial and spitefully bent against each other, that what one approved, others rejected, even for this reason, because it was there approved.

SECT. X.

Answer to the Objection, that divers Books were not received by all.

THERE were some indeed, though very few, among those that would be called Christians, who rejected all those Books, which they

they ſaw contradicted their peculiar Opinions. Such, for inſtance, as out of hatred of the *Jews* reviled their *God*, the Maker of the World; and the *Law* which he had given them: or on the other ſide, ſuch as for fear of the evils which Chriſtians were to undergo, choſe to lurk and lye hid under the name of *Jews*; who had liberty, without any danger, to profeſs their Religion. But theſe very Men were renounced, in thoſe times, by all other Chriſtians throughout the World: when as yet all that differed in their opinions, with the ſafety of piety, were tolerated, by the order of the Apoſtles, with great patience. As for the former kind of theſe adulterate *Chriſtians*, I think they have been ſufficiently confuted, both by that which we have ſaid before, when we proved that *there was but one only true God*, the ſole framer of the whole World; As alſo by thoſe very *Books*, which that they might have ſome ſemblance of *Chriſtians*, they did admit of, ſpecially the *Goſpel* of *Luke*: wherein is evidently ſhewn that the ſame *God* whom *Moſes* and the *Hebrews* worſhipped, was preached by *Chriſt*. And the other *ſort* we ſhall more fitly *confute*, when we come to oppugn *thoſe* that both are and would be called *Jews*. For the preſent only this I ſay, that their impudence is wonderful great, who ſlight and extenuate the *authority* of *Paul*; ſeeing there was not one of all the *Apoſtles*, that founded and taught more *Churches* than he did: and his Miracles were at that time reported to be exceeding numerous, when (as e'rewhile we ſaid) there might eaſily have been trial, and enquiry made of the *truth* of the matter. If then it be true that he wrought *wonders*, why may we not believe him concern-

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ing his *Heavenly Viſions*, and *inſtruction* received from *Chriſt* himſelf? to whom if he was ſo dear, it cannot be that he ſhould teach any thing inglorious or ingrateful unto *Chriſt*, as *falſities* or untruths would have been. And as touching that particular, which is the only thing whereof they accuſe him, namely his *doctrine* of the liberty and freedom which was purchaſed for the *Hebrews* from thoſe Rites and Ceremonies that were formerly commanded them by *MOSES*; He had no reaſon at all to teach it, but only the truth of the thing which he aſſerted. For he himſelf was both circumciſed, and did alſo of his own accord obſerve very many things which the Law enjoyned. And then for the ſake of the Chriſtian Religion, he both did more difficult and ſuffered harder things than the Law required, or could be expected upon the account of the Law; and taught alſo his *Diſciples* to do and ſuffer the like. Whence it appears that he uttered no flattering or enticing ſpeeches unto his *auditors*; who were taught inſtead of the *Sabbath*, to keep every *day holy* for divine *worſhip*, and inſtead of the little expences which the *Law* required to ſuffer the loſs of all their goods, and in ſtead of the *bloud* of Beaſts, to conſecrate their own *bloud* unto *God*. And further, *Paul* himſelf plainly affirms, that *Peter*, *John*, and *James*, in token of their conſent with him, gave him the *right hands* of fellowſhip: which he never durſt have ſpoken, if it had not been true, becauſe the ſame Men being then alive might have *convicted* him for a lyar.

Theſe therefore (of whom I have now ſpoken) being excluded, as ſcarce deſerving the name of Chriſtians; the moſt manifeſt conſent of ſo many

many Congregations of Chriſtians, who received theſe Books; added to what hath been ſpoken of the Miracles which the Writers of them wrought, and the ſingular care which God takes about matters of this kind, ought to be ſufficient to induce any indifferent Men to give *credit* thereunto: ſpecially conſidering that they are wont commonly to credit any other Books of *Hiſtory*, which have no ſuch teſtimonies; unleſs they ſee ſome plain reaſon to the contrary, which cannot be ſaid of any of thoſe Books whereof we have ſpoken.

SECT. XI.

Anſwer to an Objection, that theſe Books ſeem to contain things impoſſible.

FOR if any body ſay, that ſome things are related in theſe Books, which are impoſſible to be done; the Objection vaniſhes, when we conſider what hath been before diſcourſed: that there are things which cannot indeed be done by Men, but are poſſible with God (ſuch, that is, as include in themſelves no repugnancy or contradiction, as we ſpeak) and that in the number of ſuch things, are even thoſe Miraculous Powers which we moſt of all admire, and the recalling of the Dead to Life again.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

Or things contrary to Reaſon.

NEITHER are they to be more regarded, who ſay that ſome *doctrines* are compriſed in theſe *Books* which are diſagreeing to right *reaſon*: For this is confuted firſt by ſuch a vaſt multitude of Men who wanted no wit, learning or wiſdom, as have followed the authority of theſe Books, ever ſince the firſt times. And then all thoſe things which were ſhewn in the firſt Book to be conſonant to right reaſon; for inſtance, *that there is one God*, who alone is abſolutely *perfect*, *infinite* in vertue, life, wiſdom, and goodneſs, of whom all things that have any being were *made*: whoſe care and providence reacheth over all his works, eſpecially unto Men; and who can after this life bountifully reward all them that obey him: and that we ought to bridle our ſenſual appetites: that amongſt Men there is *kindred* and alliance, and therefore they ought to love one another with ſincere affection: All theſe you ſhall find moſt plainly delivered in theſe Books. But to aſſert any thing for certain beyond theſe, either about the nature of God, or about his will, by the mere conduct of humane reaſon, the contrary reſolutions, not only of the Schools among themſelves, but of particular Philoſophers, may teach us how unſafe and fallacious it is.

And it is no marvel: for if Men do ſo far diſagree in their opinions, when they diſpute about the nature of their own *Soul*, then they

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muſt needs much more diſſent, when they go about to determine any thing not revealed concerning the *higheſt mind*, and the moſt ſupreme *Spirit* which ſo far tranſcends our weak apprehenſion. If (as prudent Men are wont to ſay) to enquire into the *Counſels* of Kings be *dangerous*, and not to be attempted or *attained* by us; who then is there ſo ſagacious, that he ſhould hope to be able by his own conjecture to find out what God's will is in thoſe things, which he may will freely as he pleaſes? Wherefore *Plato* ſaid very well, that none of theſe hidden *myſteries* could be known without an *Oracle*. Now there can no *Oracle* be proved to be an *Oracle* indeed by any clearer *teſtimonies* than thoſe that are contained in the ſaid *Books* of the *new covenant*. It is ſo far from being proved, that it is not ſo much as aſſerted, that God did ever reveal any thing to Men concerning his *nature*, which was repugnant to theſe Books: Nor can there any later ſignification of his *will*, which is credible, be produced. For if there was any thing otherwiſe commanded or permitted before the times of *Chriſt*, in ſuch matters as are either plainly indifferent, or not at all in themſelves due, nor plainly diſhoneſt, it makes nothing againſt theſe Books; ſince that in ſuch matters the later Laws annul the former.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

Anſwer to an Objection, that ſome of theſe Books are repugnant to the other.

THERE are thoſe who are wont further to object againſt theſe Books, that there is ſometime a certain diſagreement in their ſenſe. But, quite contrary, whoſoever will judge of this matter with an indifferent mind, ſhall find this alſo may be added to the arguments for the authority of theſe Books, that they do moſt manifeſtly and apparently *agree* about ſuch things as concern any weighty point of *doctrine* or *hiſtory*: Which *conſent* and accord cannot elſewhere be found among any other *Writers* that are of one and the ſame *ſect* or *profeſſion*, whether we conſider the *Jews* or the *Greek Philoſophers*, the *Phyſicians* or the *Roman Lawyers*. All which do not only *differ* much among themſelves, yea, even thoſe that are of the ſame *ſect*, as *Plato* and *Xenophon*; but oftentimes one ſhall find the ſame *Writer* to affirm now one thing, then another, as if he were *forgetful* of himſelf, or knew not what to reſolve upon. But theſe *Writers*, of whom we ſpeak, do inculcate and expreſs the ſame points of *faith*; they deliver the ſame *Commandments*; and as for their *narration* of the life, and death, and reſurrection of *Chriſt*, the Sum and *ſubſtance* in them all is the very ſame.

As touching ſome ſmall circumſtances, which make nothing to the main matter, they might happily have admitted a very eaſie reconcilia-

tion; though we now do not know it, becauſe of the likeneſs of things done at divers times, the ambiguity of names, or more names than one of the ſame Man or place, and ſuch like things. Nay this very thing ought to vindicate and free theſe *Writers* from all ſuſpicion of *falſhood*; it being uſual with thoſe that would have lies and untruths credited, to relate all *circumſtances* by compact and agreement, ſo as there ſhall not appear any colour or ſhew of *difference*. Or if it be ſo, that for any ſmall *difference*, which cannot ſo exactly be reconciled, a whole Book ſhall loſe its credit; then we muſt believe no *Books* at all, ſpecially thoſe of *hiſtory*: yet we ſee that *Polybius*, *Halicarnaſſenſis*, *Livy*, and *Plutarch*, for the *ſubſtance* of them are eſteemed *authentical* and *true*, though in ſome *circumſtances* they do not agree: Which makes it the more equal and juſt, that no ſuch thing ſhould deſtroy their credit, who we ſee by their very Writings were always moſt ſtudious of Piety and Truth.

SECT. XIV.

Anſwer to an Objection, taken from outward Teſtimonies, which make more for theſe Books.

THERE remains another way of overthrowing a Teſtimony, which is by producing contrary Teſtimonies out of other Authors.

But

But I dare boldly ſay, that there are no ſuch *teſtimonies* to be found, unleſs a Man will produce the *ſayings* of them that were *born* a long time after, and of ſuch alſo as did ſo openly profeſs *enmity* againſt *Chriſtianity*, that they could be no fit *Witneſſes* in this matter.

Nay, on the contrary, if need were, we could alledge many *teſtimonies* to confirm divers parts of the *hiſtory* which is delivered in the ſaid *Books*. Thus both *Hebrews* and *Pagans* report that *Jeſus* was crucified, and that ſundry *miracles* were done by him and his *Diſciples*. Thoſe moſt famous Books of *Joſephus*, which were ſet forth about Forty years after *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion, do make mention of *Herod*, *Pilat*, *Feſtus*, *Felix*, *John* the *Baptiſt*, *Gamaliel*, and of the *deſtruction* of *Hieruſalem* at large. Herewithal agree that which the Authors of the *Talmud* have recorded concerning *thoſe times*. *Tacitus* relates how cruelly *Nero* uſed the *Chriſtians*. And anciently there were certain *Books* extant, not only of private Men, as of *Phlegon*, and others; but alſo ſome publick *Acts*, whereunto the *Chriſtians* appealed, for that in them there was mention made of the *Star* that appeared at *Chriſt*'s Nativity, and alſo of the Earthquake and Eclipſe of the *Sun* (againſt the courſe of Nature, it being then full Moon) at the time of *Chriſt*'s Paſſion upon the Croſs.

SECT. XV.

Anſwer to the Objection, that the Scriptures were changed.

NOW what can be farther objected againſt theſe Books, I ſee not, unleſs it be ſaid that they remained not altogether *the ſame* that they were from the beginning. And indeed it muſt be granted that what is *common* to other Books might happen, nay did happen to *thoſe*; namely, that by the careleſneſs, or the perverſe care of the *Tranſcribers*, ſome Letters, ſyllables or words might be changed, left out, or added. But it is an *unjuſt thing* to bring in queſtion the *truth* of ſuch a *Book* or *evidence* only, becauſe in ſo many *ages* there could not but be great variety of *Copies*, ſince both cuſtome and reaſon requires that what appears in the moſt, and moſt ancient Copies, be preferred to the reſt. But that either by fraud or any other way, all the Copies were corrupted, and that in point of doctrine, or ſome remarkable piece of hiſtory, will never be proved: for there are neither any evidences, nor any witneſſes of thoſe times, which atteſt it. But if, as was ſaid before, there be any thing urged, in much later times, by thoſe who bare an implacable hatred to the Diſciples of theſe Books; that ought to be lookt upon as a Reproach, not as a Teſtimony.

And this truly, which we have ſaid, may be well thought a ſufficient Anſwer to thoſe, who object a change in the Scripture; for he who affirms that, eſpecially againſt a writing which hath

hath been long, and in abundance of places, received, ought himſelf to prove his charge. But to make the vanity of this Objection more fully appear, we will ſhew, that what they feign, neither was, nor could be done.

We have proved before, that the Books were written by the Authors whoſe Names they bear: which being granted, it follows that other Books were not foiſted into their room, nor was any notable part of them changed. For ſince that change muſt needs have ſome deſign, that part would notoriouſly differ from the other parts and Books, which were not changed: which cannot now any where be diſcerned; nay, there is an admirable agreement, as we ſaid, in their Senſes.

Beſides, as ſoon as any of the Apoſtles, or Apoſtolical Men publiſhed any thing; there is no doubt to be made, but Chriſtians with great diligence (as became their piety, and care to preſerve and propagate truth to Poſterity) took from thence many Copies for their uſe. Which therefore were diſperſed, as far as the Chriſtian Name; through *Europe*, *Aſia* and *Egypt*, in which Places the *Greek* Language was ſpoken.

And more than this, the Original Copies alſo, as we ſaid before, were preſerved till Two Hundred Years after *Chriſt*. Now it was not poſſible that any Book diffuſed into ſo many Copies, and kept not only by the private diligence of particular Perſons, but the common care of the Churches; ſhould be altered by the hand of any falſifier. Add further, that theſe Books in the following ages were tranſlated into the *Syriac*, *Ethiopick*, *Arabick*, and *Latin* Tongues: which *tranſlations* are yet extant; and do not differ in

any thing of moment from the *Greek Copies* themſelves.

Beſides, we have the *Writings* of thoſe Men, who were taught by the *Apoſtles* themſelves, or by their *Diſciples*, wherein many places are cited out of theſe *Books* to the ſame ſenſe and meaning, which now we read them. Neither was there any in the *Church* of ſo great *authority* in thoſe times, as to have met with obedience, if he would have changed any thing: As is plain enough by the free and open diſſent of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*, from thoſe that were moſt eminent in the *Church*. After which times there ſucceeded many *other men*, of great Learning and Judgment, who having firſt made diligent inquiry thereof, received theſe *Books*, as retaining their *original* purity. Hitherto alſo may be referred what but now we ſaid of divers *ſects* of *Chriſtians*; all which, at leaſt ſuch as acknowledged, God to be the Maker of the World, and Chriſt to be the Author of a new Law, did receive and uſe theſe *Books* accordingly as we do the ſame. And if any had attempted to *alter*, or put any thing new into any part thereof, they ſhould have been accuſed by the reſt for *forgery* and *falſe-dealing* therein. Neither was there ever any *Sect* that had the liberty at their pleaſure to *alter* any of theſe *Books* for their own turns; For it is manifeſt that all of them did draw their *arguments* one againſt another, out of the ſame. And as for that which we touched concerning *divine providence*, it belongs no leſs unto the *chiefeſt parts*, than unto the *whole Books*; namely, that it is not agreeable to it, that *GOD* ſhould ſuffer ſo many *Thouſand Men*, which ſincerely deſired to be *godly*, and earneſtly ſought after *eternal life*, to be

be led headlong into that *error* which they could no way *avoid.* And thus much ſhall ſuffice to be ſpoken for the *authority* of the *Books* of the *new covenant*, whence alone, if there were no other helps, we might be ſufficiently inſtructed concerning the *true Religion.*

SECT. XVI.

For the Authority of the Books of the Old Teſtament.

NOW foraſmuch as it hath pleaſed *God* to leave us alſo the *writings* and *evidences* of the *Jewiſh Religion*, which was anciently the true, and affords no ſmall *teſtimonies* for *Chriſtianity*; Therefore it will not be amiſs, in the next place, to juſtifie the *authority* of the ſame. Firſt then, that theſe *Books* were written by the ſame Men, whoſe Names they bear, is manifeſt in like manner, as we have proved of *ours* before, of the *New Covenant.*

Theſe *Authors* were either *Prophets* or other very *faithful* and *credible men*, ſuch as was *Eſdras*, who is thought to have collected the *Books* of the Old *Teſtament* into one Volume, during the life time of the Prophet *Haggai*, *Malachi*, and *Zachary*. I will not here repeat again what is ſaid before in the *commendation* of *Moſes.* Both that part of *hiſtory*, which at firſt was delivered by *him*, as we have ſhewn in the firſt *Book*; and *that* alſo which was collected after his time is witneſſed even by many of the *Heathen.* Thus the Annals of the *Phœnicians* have recorded

the names of *David* and *Solomon*, and their *Leagues* with the Men of *Tyre*. Aſwel *Beroſus* as the *Hebrew* Writers, makes mention of *Nebuchadonoſor*, and of other *Chaldean* Kings. He whom *Jeremy* calls *Vaphres* King of *Ægypt*, is termed *Apries* by *Herodotus*. In like manner the Books of the *Grecians* are repleniſhed with Narrations concerning *Cyrus* and his Succeſſors, until the times of *Darius*. And many other things concerning the *Nation* of the *Jews* are related by *Joſephus* in his Books againſt *Apion*: whereunto we may add what before we have touched out of *Strabo* and *Trogus*. But as for us *Chriſtians*, we cannot in the leaſt doubt of the truth of theſe Books, out of every one of which almoſt, there are teſtimonies extant in our Books, which are found likewiſe in the *Hebrew*. Neither do we find, when *Chriſt* reprehended many things in the *Doctors* of the *Law* and *Phariſees* of his time, that ever he accus'd them of *forgery* committed againſt the Writings of *Moſes*, or the *Prophets*; or that they uſed counterfeit Books, or ſuch as were changed.

Then after *Chriſt*'s time, it cannot be proved, neither is it credible that the *Scripture* was corrupted in matters of any moment; if we conſider rightly how far and wide over the face of the earth, the Nation of the *Jews* was ſpread, who every where were the keepers of theſe Books. For firſt of all, the Ten Tribes were led away captive by the *Aſſyrians* into *Media*, then afterward the two other Tribes: And many of theſe alſo, after *Cyrus* granted them liberty to return, ſetled themſelves in foreign Countries. The *Macedonians* invited them with great *promiſes* to come into *Alexandria*. The cruelty of

Antiochus,

Antiochus, the civil Wars of the *Maccabees*, together with those of *Pompey* and *Sossius* from without, did disperse and scatter abroad many of them. The parts of *Africa* about *Cyrene* were full of the *Jews*: so were the Cities of *Asia*, *Macedonia*, *Lycaonia*; and likewise the Isles of *Cyprus*, *Crete*, and others. Also what a number of them there was at *Rome*, may be learned out of *Horace*, *Juvenal*, and *Martial*. Now it is not possible that such Multitudes so far distant one from another, should be *cozened* in this kind; neither could they ever accord all in the coining of an *untruth*. Add moreover, that almost Three Hundred Years before *Christ*, at the appointment and care of the Kings of *Egypt*, those Books of the *Hebrews* were translated into the *Greek* Tongue by those that are called the *Seventy Interpreters*. So as then the *Grecians* had the sense and substance of them, though in another Language; whereby they were the less liable to be changed. Nay more, these *Books* were translated both into the *Chaldee* Tongue, and into that of *Jerusalem*, that is, the half *Syriac*, a little before, and a little after the time of *Christ*. Other *Greek translations* afterward there were, as namely by *Aquila*, *Symmachus* and *Theodotion*; all which *Origen* compared with that of the *Seventy Interpreters*; and after him others also, who could find no diversity of *history*, or of any *matter* worth speaking of.

Philo lived in the Reign of *Caligula*, and *Josephus* survived the times of both the *Vespasians*: which two *Writers* alledge out of the *Hebrew* Books the *same things* that we read at this day.

Now in these very times began *Christian Religion* to be more and more propagated, being pro-

profeſſed by many of the *Hebrews*, and by ſundry Perſons that had learned the *Hebrew* tongue; who if the *Jews* had falſified in any notable part, could have quickly diſcovered it by comparing more ancient *Copies*, and ſo have made it publickly known. But they are ſo far from doing this, that on the other ſide they alledge many *teſtimonies* out of the old *covenant*, to the ſame ſenſe and meaning that they are uſed by the *Hebrews*: which *Hebrews* may ſooner be accuſed of any other fault, than (I will not ſay falſhood, but of ſo much as) negligence about theſe Books; which they have ſo religiouſly and exactly deſcribed and compared, that they know how often any one Letter is found therein.

The laſt though not the leaſt *argument*, to prove that the *Jews* did not purpoſely *corrupt* or *alter* the Scripture, may be, becauſe the *Chriſtians* out of the very *Books* which are read by the *Jews* do evince, and as they truſt very ſtrongly, that their *Lord* and *Maſter Jeſus* is that ſame very *Meſſias* which was anciently *promiſed* to the *Jews* their Forefathers. Which above all things the *Jews* would have taken care ſhould not have been done, when the *controverſie* aroſe between them and the *Chriſtians*, if ever it had been in their power to have *changed* what they liſted.

The

The Fourth Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A particular Confutation of the Religions oppoſite to Chriſtianity.

THE *Fourth* Book beginning with that pleaſure, which many Men are wont to take in beholding the danger wherein others are, while they are in none themſelves; ſhews that it ought to be the greateſt pleaſure of a Chriſtian Man in this life, not only to rejoyce and bleſs himſelf that he hath found out the Truth, but to lend his help alſo to others that wander up and down in the Labyrinths of Errour; and to make them partakers of ſo great a benefit.

Which we in ſome meaſure have indeavoured to do in the former Books: (the demonſtration of

of that which is true, containing in it ſelf the confutation of what is falſe) yet in regard that all kinds of Religions, which oppoſe themſelves to the Chriſtian, viz. *Paganiſm*, *Judaiſm* and *Mahometiſm*; beſides that which is common to all, have certain errors proper to every one of them, and their peculiar Arguments which they are wont to oppoſe us withal; it will not be amiſs to make a particular Diſputation againſt every one of theſe: Firſt, beſeeching the Readers to free their judgments from leaning to a Party, and from long cuſtom and prejudice, (as impediments of a good mind) that with the greater indifferency they may take cognizance of what ſhall be ſaid.

SECT. II.

And firſt of Paganiſm, that there is but one God. Created Spirits are good or bad: the good not to be honoured, but as the moſt high God directs.

TO begin then againſt *Pagans*: If they ſay that there are divers *eternal* and *co-equal Gods*, we have confuted this Opinion before in the firſt Book, where we taught that *there is but only one God*, who is the cauſe of all things. Or if they by the name of *Gods*, do underſtand the created *Spirits* which are ſuperior to Men, they then either mean the *good* or the *bad*: if they ſay the *good*, firſt, they ought to be well aſſured that ſuch are ſo indeed, otherwiſe they commit a dangerous

gerous error in receiving enemies in ſtead of *friends*, and *Traitors* for *Ambaſſadors*. Then it were but reaſon that they ſhould in their very worſhip, make an evident difference, between the moſt high God, and thoſe Spirits. And likewiſe be ſatisfied what order there is among them, what good may be expected from each of them, and what honour the moſt High is willing ſhould be beſtowed on every one of them. All which being wanting in their Religion, it is plain from thence how uncertain that *Religion* is, and how it were a ſafer courſe for them to betake themſelves to the *worſhip* of one *Almighty God*; which even *Plato* confeſſed was the duty of every wiſe Man, ſpecially for that to whomſoever *God* is propitious and favourable, to them theſe good *Angels* muſt needs be ſerviceable and gracious, being the Miniſters and Servants of the moſt High.

SECT. III.

Evil Spirits adored by Pagans, and how impious a thing it is.

BUT it was the bad not the good *Spirits* which the *Pagans* did *worſkip*, as may be proved by weighty *reaſons*: firſt, becauſe theſe *adored Angels* did not throw off their *worſhippers* unto the *ſervice* of the *true God*, but as much as in them lay, laboured to *aboliſh* the ſame; or at leaſt in every reſpect required equal *honour* with the *Almighty*. Secondly, becauſe they procured all the miſchief they could to the worſhippers of the One moſt High God, by provoking both

both Magiſtrates and People to inflict puniſhments upon them. For when it was lawful for *Poets* to ſing of the murders and adulteries committed by the *Gods*, and for the *Epicures* to take away all *divine Providence*, and any other *Religion* (though never ſo different in Rites) was allowed, as the *Egyptian*, the *Phrygian*, the *Grecian*, the *Thuſcan*, and the ſacred rites of *Rome*; even then generally the *Jews* alone were made *ridiculous*, as appears by *Satyrs* and *Epigrams* written upon them; and ſometimes alſo ſuffered *baniſhment*. And as for *Chriſtians* they were *afflicted* with moſt cruel puniſhments: no other cauſe whereof can be given than that both theſe *Sects* did worſhip one God, whoſe *honour* was impeached by the *multitude* of ſuch *Gods* as the *Heathen* adored: who did not ſo much vie one with another, as with Him.

Thirdly, this was manifeſt by the manner of their *worſhip*, which no way beſeemed any good and honeſt *Spirit*; namely, by humane blood, by the running of naked Men in the Temples, by Pageants and dancings, full of naſty filthineſs: ſuch as may be ſeen at this day among ſome People of *America* and *Africa*, who yet ſit in the darkneſs of *Gentiliſm*.

Yea, which is more, there both anciently were, and now are People, who worſhipt evil Spirits; which they knew and profeſſed to be ſuch: As the *Perſians Arimanius*, the *Greeks*, thoſe they called *Cacodæmons*, the Latins their *Vejoves*; and now ſome *Æthiopians* and *Indians*, ſuch like Deities; than which nothing can be imagined more impious. For what is *Religious worſhip* but a *teſtimony* of an infinite *goodneſs*, that a Man doth acknowledge to be in *him* whom he

he worſhippeth? which if it be exhibited unto a bad *Spirit*, it is falſe and deceitful, implying in it no leſs crime than *high treaſon*; foraſmuch as the *honour* due unto the King is not only withdrawn from him, but is confer'd upon his enemy, and one that hath traiterouſly revolted from Him. Moreover, vain is that perſwaſion which they conceive of *GOD*, that *he is good*, and therefore will not *puniſh* this offence; becauſe they think ſo to do, were contrary to his *goodneſs*. For mercy or *clemency*, that it may be juſt, hath its bounds and limits: and where *wickedneſs* abounds beyond meaſure, there *juſtice* doth as it were neceſſarily require the infliction of *puniſhment*. Neither is it leſs blameable, that they pretend Fear conſtrains them to honour wicked Spirits: ſince He that is perfectly Good, is as communicative alſo; and therefore the Author of all other Natures, which are his productions. And if he be, then it follows that he hath *abſolute* power and dominion over all *creatures* as over his workmanſhip; ſo that nothing can be done by *any* of them, which he hath a *deſire* to hinder. Which things being certainly true, we may eaſily gather that evil Spirits can no further do any hurt to him, who hath God, moſt high and moſt tranſcendently good, favourable to him; than that God, for the ſake of ſome good or other, ſhall think fit to permit.

Nor can a Man obtain any thing of thoſe evil Spirits by his Prayers, which is not to be rejected: becauſe he that is evil is then worſt of all, when he feigns himſelf to be good; and the gifts of Enemies, are meer ſnares and treacheries.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Againſt the worſhip, which in Paganiſm is exhibited to Men after their Death.

MOreover there were heretofore and now alſo are *Pagans*, that tell us, they give honour and *worſhip* to the *Souls* of *Men departed*. But firſt they ſhould have here alſo made ſome manifeſt diſtinction between this *honour* and *that* which is *due* unto the moſt high *God:* Then again, all *prayers* made to them are but vain and fruitleſs, unleſs thoſe *Spirits* were able to give us ſomething; of which their worſhippers have no certainty: nor is there any more ground to ſay that they can, than that they cannot. But another thing is worſt of all, to wit, that many of them to whom ſuch *glory* is given by the *Heathen*, in their life time were notoriouſly *wicked*, and addicted to one filthy *vice* or other: Thus *Bacchus* was a drunkard, and *Hercules* effeminate; *Romulus* proved a very villain to his Brother, and *Jupiter* a traytor to his own Father. So that their honour redounds to the diſgrace of the true G O D, and of Vertue which he loves: whilſt Vices which are inticing enough of themſelves, it recommends to Men by Religion.

SECT.

SECT. V.

Against worshipping of Stars and Elements.

OF more antiquity than this was the worshipping of *Stars* and of the *Elements*, as Fire, Water, Air, and Earth; wherein great *ignorance* and *folly* was committed. For *prayers* are the greatest part of *religious worship*, which cannot without folly be directed to any object save to *intelligent natures*: but sense tells us that the *Elements* (as we call them) are no such things. And as for the *Stars*, if any say they are, he will never be able to prove it; since that no such matter can be collected from their operations and *influences* which demonstrate their nature; but rather we may gather the contrary by their *motion*, which is not variable like to that in things indued with *liberty* of will, but *constant* and unalterable. Besides, we have shewn before that the course and motion of the *Stars* is appointed for the use of *men*, whence Man ought to acknowledge himself to be both liker to God than they, in his better part, as also more dear unto him: And therefore much injury should he do to his own worth and dignity, if he submit himself to such things, as God hath given to be *serviceable* unto him: whereas on the contrary he ought rather to *render thanks* for them which cannot do, or it is not proved can do so much for themselves.

SECT. VI.

Againſt worſhipping of Bruit-beaſts.

BUT nothing is ſo unworthy as this, that Men, eſpecially the *Egyptians*, ſunk at length into ſuch a ſottiſhneſs; as to worſhip brute Beaſts. For though, in ſome of them there appears ſome ſhadow, as we may call it, of underſtanding; yet that underſtanding is nothing, if we compare it with Man's. For they can neither expreſs their inward conceptions by diſtinct words, or by writing; nor do works of divers kinds, no nor works of the ſame kind after divers manners: much leſs can they attain to the knowledge of numbers, dimenſions, and the celeſtial motions. Whereas, on the other ſide, Man, by the force and diligence of his wit, catches all manner of Animals, though never ſo ſtrong; whether wild Beaſts, Birds, or Fiſhes: and ſo maſters them, that in ſome meaſure he makes them ſubject to his Laws; as Elephants, Lyons, Horſes and Oxen. Yea, from thoſe which are hurtful, he draws to himſelf ſome profit, as Medicines from Serpents: And hath this uſe and benefit from them all (which is utterly unknown to them) that he contemplates the compoſition of their Bodies, the ſcituation of their parts, and comparing both their ſpecies and their kinds one with another, learns from thence alſo his own dignity; as much as the ſtructure of Man's body is more perfect and noble than that of the reſt. Which things, if any Man rightly conſider, he will be ſo far from conſidering other living Creatures

tures as Gods; that he will rather look upon himſelf as conſtituted by the moſt High God, a kind of God over them.

SECT. VII.

Againſt worſhipping of things that are no ſubſtances.

WE find alſo that the *Grecians*, *Romans*, and others worſhipped thoſe things which have no ſubſiſtence, but are meer Accidents of other things.

For to omit thoſe *uncouth Deities*, the *Fever*, dame *Impudence*, and the like, let us name the better ſort; ſuch were *health*, which is nothing but a right temperature of the parts of the body: *good fortune*, which is an event that is correſpondent to a Man's deſire: The *affections* alſo, ſuch as love, fear, anger, hope, and the reſt, which proceed from the conſideration of ſomething that is good or evil, eaſie or difficult; are *certain motions* or *paſſions* in that part of the mind which is united to the body, by the blood eſpecially; not having any abſolute power of themſelves, but are ſubordinate *hand-maids* to the commands of the *will*, their *Miſtreſs* at leaſt in their continuance and direction. Then for Vertues, whoſe Names are divers; *Prudence*, in chuſing what is profitable for us; *Fortitude*, in undertaking dangers; *Juſtice*, in abſtaining from that which is another Man's; *Temperance*, in the moderation of pleaſures, *&c.* they are certain inclinations and propenſions in the mind unto that which is

right, grown up by long exerciſe and practice. Which as they may be augmented in a Man; ſo may they by neglect be diminiſhed; nay quite loſt and aboliſhed. As for *Honour* (whereunto we read there were Temples dedicated) it is other Mens judgment, or good opinion, concerning one whom they ſuppoſed indued with Vertue: which is often beſtowed upon bad men, as well as good; by the natural proneneſs there is in Men to err in their judgment.

Theſe therefore having no ſubſiſtence, and therefore not to be compared in dignity, and worth, with things that do ſubſiſt; nor having any underſtanding of Mens prayers or veneration; it is moſt abſurd and unreaſonable to worſhip them as Gods: when for this very thing He is to be worſhipped, who can both give and preſerve them.

SECT. VIII.

Anſwer to the Argument of the Gentiles taken from Miracles done among them.

THE *Pagans* for the commendation of their *Religion* are wont to alledge *Miracles*, but *ſuch* as in many things may be excepted againſt.

For the wiſeſt Men among the *Pagans* rejected many of theſe, as ſupported by no teſtimony of any credible witneſs; but plainly counterfeit and fabulous. Other Miracles, which they ſaid were done, hapned in ſome ſecret place, in the night, before one or two, whoſe eyes the craft of the Prieſts might eaſily delude by falſe ſhews and

and appearances of things. And there are others which raiſed great admiration, and paſſed for wonders, meerly becauſe they met with thoſe, who were ignorant of natural things; eſpecially of hidden properties. As for inſtance, ſuch a thing might happen, if one ſhould draw Iron with the Loadſtone, among people who knew nothing of its vertue: in which arts *Simon Magus*, and *Apollonius*, as many have recorded, were very skilful.

I do not deny, but ſome things greater than theſe were ſeen, which by Man's power alone could not be drawn out of natural cauſes; and yet did not need a power which was truly divine; that is, omnipotent: but might be performed by Spirits that are placed between God and Men. Who by their celerity, efficacy, ſubtilty and diligence, can eaſily carry things far diſtant from one place to another; and compound things that are very different; to the working of ſuch effects, as ſhall ſtrike Men with aſtoniſhment. But that the Spirits, whereby this was effected, were not good, and therefore neither was the Religion good; appears already from what hath been ſaid before. And from hence alſo, that they ſaid they were compelled to do things, even againſt their wills, by the power of certain charms: when the wiſeſt of the *Pagans* agree that there can be no ſuch vertue in words; but only a power of perſwaſion, and that no other way than by their ſignification.

And it is another token of their wickedneſs, that they undertook to allure and draw this or that body, though never ſo backward to it, into the love of ſuch or ſuch a Perſon. Wherein they were injurious to them; either in their vain

promiſes, or in effecting what they promiſed: for this alſo is forbidden by humane Laws, as a piece of Sorcery. Neither need any Man wonder why God ſuffered ſome *marvels* to be wrought by evil *Spirits* among the *Gentiles*, ſeeing they deſerved to be cheated with ſuch illuſions, who ſo long time had forſaken the worſhip of the *true God*.

Moreover this is an argument of their *weakneſs* and impotency, that their *works* never brought any conſiderable good along with them. For if any ſeemed to be called back to life after they were dead, they did not continue alive; neither could they exerciſe the *functions* of living Creatures. Or if it happened that any thing proceeding happily from a *divine power*, did appear to the *Pagans*; yet the ſame was not foretold ſhould come to paſs for the confirmation of their *Religion*, and therefore there might be other cauſes, and far different reaſons, which the divine efficacy propounded to it ſelf in the doing thoſe things. As for example, if it was true, that *Veſpaſian* reſtored ſight to one blind; this was done, that he being thereby made more venerable, might the more eaſily obtain the *Roman* Empire: to which he was choſen by God, that he might be a Miniſter of his Judgments upon the *Jews*. More ſuch like cauſes there may be of other *wonders*, which had no relation at all to their *Religion*.

SECT. IX.

And from Oracles.

THE very ſame likewiſe, in a manner, may ſerve for anſwer to that which they object concerning *Oracles*; eſpecially what we have ſaid, that theſe Men did worthily deſerve to be *deluded*, for contempt of that *knowledge* which reaſon or ancient tradition ſuggeſted to every one of them. Then again the words of the *Oracles*, for the moſt part, were *ambiguous*, and might eaſily receive an interpretation, from any event whatſoever. Or if there was any thing more expreſly foretold by them, yet it is not neceſſary that it ſhould proceed from an *all-knowing mind*: For it was either ſuch a thing as might be foreſeen by *natural cauſes* then exiſting, as ſome *Phyſicians* have foretold Diſeaſes that are a coming; or elſe ſome probable conjecture might be made by that which commonly falls out and uſually comes to paſs, as we read of ſome *perſons* well skill'd in civil affairs, that have made notable gueſſes at *future events*. Again, ſuppoſe that amongſt the *Pagans*, *God* ſometimes uſed the *miniſtery* of ſome *Prophets* to foretel thoſe things, which could have no certain *cauſe* beſides the *will* of *God*; yet this did not approve or confirm their *heatheniſh Religion*, but rather overthrew it. Such for inſtance are thoſe things, in the fourth Eclogue of *Virgil*, taken out of the *Sibyls verſes*; where unwittingly the *Poet* gives us a lively deſcription of the coming of *Chriſt*, and his benefits. So in the ſame Books of the *Sibyls* it was,

that he ought to be acknowledg'd as King, who ſhould be our King indeed: and that he was to come out of the Eaſt, who ſhould have *dominion* over all. We read in *Porphyry* of the *Oracle* of *Apollo*, which ſaith, that other *Gods* are aerial *Spirits*, but the *God* of the *Hebrews* is only to be worſhipped: which ſaying, if the worſhippers of *Apollo* obey, then they muſt ceaſe to worſhip him: if they do not obey it, then they make their *God* a lyar. Add further, if thoſe *Spirits* had reſpected or intended the good of Mankind, above all things, they would have preſcribed a general Rule of life to Mankind, and alſo given ſome certain aſſurance of a *reward* to them that lived accordingly; neither of which was ever done by them.

On the other ſide oftentimes in their Verſes we find ſome *Kings* commended which were wicked men, ſome *Champions* extol'd and dignified with divine honour, others allured to immodeſt and unlawful love, or to the ſeeking after filthy lucre, or committing of Murder, as might be ſhewn by many Examples.

SECT. X.

Paganiſm decayed of its own accord ſo ſoon as humane aid ceaſed.

BESIDES all that hath hitherto been ſaid, *Paganiſm* miniſters to us a mighty *argument* againſt it ſelf; becauſe that whereſoever it becomes deſtitute of *humane* force to ſupport it, there ſtraightway it comes to *ruine*, as if the *founda-*

foundation thereof were quite overthrown. For if we take a view of all the Kingdoms and States that are among *Chriſtians* or *Mahumetans*, we ſhall find no memory of *Paganiſm*, but in *Books*. Nay *hiſtories* tell us, that even in thoſe times, when the Emperors endeavoured to uphold the *Pagan* Religion either by violence and perſecution, as did the firſt of them; or by learning and ſubtilty, as did *Julian*; it notwithſtanding decayed daily, not by any violent oppoſition, nor by the brightneſs and ſplendor of lineage and deſcent, (for Jeſus was accounted by the common ſort only a Carpenters Son;) nor by the flouriſhes of learning, which they that taught the Law of *Chriſt* uſed not in their Sermons; nor by gifts and bribes, for they were poor; nor by any ſoothing and flattering ſpeeches, for on the contrary they taught that all worldly advantages muſt be deſpiſed, and that all kind of adverſity muſt be undergone for the *Goſpel*'s ſake. See then how weak and impotent *Paganiſm* was, which by ſuch means came to ruine.

Neither did the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* only make the credulity of the Gentiles to vaniſh, but even bad *Spirits* came out of divers bodies at the name of *Chriſt*: they became *dumb* alſo, and being demanded the reaſon of their ſilence, they were compelled to ſay, that they were able to do nothing where the name of *Chriſt* was called upon.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Anſwer to the Opinion of ſome that think the beginning and decay of Religions depend upon the efficacy of the Stars.

THERE have been *Philoſophers*, that did aſcribe the beginning and decay of every *Religion* unto the Stars: but this ſtar-gazing Science, which theſe Men profeſs to be skilled in, is delivered under ſuch different rules, that one can be certain of nothing, but only this, that there is no certainty at all therein.

I do not here ſpeak of ſuch effects as follow from a natural neceſſity of cauſes, but of thoſe that proceed from the will of Man, which of it ſelf hath ſuch liberty and freedom, that no *neceſſity* or violence can be impreſſed upon it from without. For if the conſent of the *will* did neceſſarily follow any outward impreſſion, then the power in our ſoul, which we may perceive it hath to conſult, deliberate and chuſe, would be given in vain. Alſo the equity of all Laws, of all rewards and puniſhments would be taken away, ſeeing there can be neither *fault* nor *merit* in that which is altogether neceſſary and inevitable.

Again, there are divers evil *acts* or effects of the will, which if they proceeded of any neceſſity from the *Heavens*, then the ſame *Heavens* and Celeſtial Bodies muſt needs receive ſuch efficacy from *God*, and ſo it would follow, that *God*, who is moſt *perfectly good*, is the true cauſe of that which is *morally evil*; And that when in his *Law* he profeſſeth himſelf to abhor *wickedneſs*, which

which a force inſerted by him into things themſelves will inevitably produce, he doth will two things contrary one to the other; that the ſame thing ſhould be done and not be done; and alſo that a Man offends in an action, which he doth by divine inſtigation.

They ſpeak more probably, that ſay the *influences* of the *Stars* do firſt affect the Air, then our Bodies, with ſuch qualities as oftentimes do excite and ſtir up in the mind ſome deſires or affections anſwerable thereunto: and the *will* being allured or enticed by theſe *motions* doth oftentimes yield unto them. But if this ſhould be granted, it makes nothing for the *queſtion* we have in hand. For ſeeing that *Chriſtian Religion* moſt of all withdraws Men from thoſe things which are pleaſing unto the body, it cannot therefore have its beginning from the *affections* of the body, and conſequently not from the *influence* of the *Stars*; which (as but now we ſaid) have no power over the mind, otherwiſe than by the *mediation* of thoſe *affections*. The moſt prudent among *Aſtrologers* exempt truly wiſe and good Men from the dominion of the *Stars*: And *ſuch* verily were they that firſt profeſſed *Chriſtianity*, as their lives do ſhew. Or if there be any efficacy in learning and knowledge againſt the infection of the body, even among *Chriſtians* there were ever ſome that were *excellent* in this particular.

Beſides, as the moſt learned do confeſs, the effects of the *Stars* reſpect certain *Climates* of the World, and are only for a ſeaſon; but this *Religion* hath now continued above the ſpace of one thouſand ſix hundred years, and that not in one part only, but in the moſt remote places of the

the World, and ſuch as are under a far different poſition of the Stars.

SECT. XII.

The chief Points of Chriſtianity are approved of by the Heathen: and if there be any thing that is hard to be believed therein, the like or worſe is found among the Pagans.

BUT the *Pagans* have the leſs to object againſt *Chriſtian Religion*: becauſe all the parts thereof are of ſuch *honeſty* and *integrity*, that they convince Mens minds by their own light. In ſo much that there have not been wanting Men among the *Pagans* alſo, who have here and there ſaid every one of thoſe things, which our Religion hath in a body all together. As to give ſome inſtances; *true Religion* conſiſts not in Rites and Ceremonies, but in the mind and *Spirit*: he is an *adulterer* that hath but *a deſire* to commit adultery: we ought not to *revenge* injuries: one Man ſhould be the *Husband* of one Wife only: the league or bond of *Matrimony* ought to be conſtant and perpetual: Man is bound to *do good* unto all, ſpecially to them that are in want: we muſt refrain from *Swearing* as much as may be: And as for our Food and Apparel we ought to content our ſelves with ſo much as will ſuffice nature, and the like. Or if happily there be ſome points in *Chriſtianity* hard to be believed, yet the like alſo is found amongſt the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* themſelves; as

as before we have ſhewn concerning the *immortality* of *Souls*, and of the *Reſurrection* of Bodies. Thus *Plato*, as he learned from the *Chaldeans*, diſtinguiſhed the Divine nature into the *Father*; and the mind of the Father; (which he calls alſo the *branch* of God, the Maker of the World) and the *Soul* or *Spirit*, which keeps together and preſerveth all things.

Julian, as great an enemy as he was of *Chriſtians*, thought that the Divine Nature might be joyned to the humane: and gave inſtance in *Æſculapius*, whom he imagined to have deſcended from *Heaven*, to the end he might teach Men the Art of *Phyſick*. The *Croſs* of *Chriſt* offendeth many: But what do not the *Pagan* Writers tell of their *Gods*? that ſome of them waited upon *Kings* and *Princes*, others were Thunder-ſtruck, others cut in ſunder. And the *wiſeſt* of them ſay, that the more it coſts us to be honeſt, the more joy and delight it affords us.

To conclude, *Plato* in the ſecond Book of his *Common-wealth*, as if he had been a *Prophet*, ſaith, for a *Man* to appear truly *juſt* and upright, it is requiſite that his *vertue* be bereaved of all outward *ornaments*; ſo that he be by others accounted a *wicked* wretch, and ſcoffed at, and laſt of all hanged. And indeed that Chriſt might be the *Pattern* of greateſt *Patience*, could no otherwiſe be obtained.

The

The Fifth Book of the TRUTH of Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A refutation of the Jews, *beginning with a ſpeech unto them or prayer for them.*

JUST like that glimmering between light and darkneſs, which appears to thoſe, who by little and little are endeavouring to get out of a dark Cave or Dungeon: ſuch doth *Judaiſm* preſent it ſelf to us (who are ſtepping out of the thick miſt of *Paganiſm*, of which we have been diſcourſing) as a part and beginning of Truth. I requeſt the *Jews* therefore not to be averſe to hear us.

We are not ignorant that they are the *offſpring* of holy Men, whom *God* was wont to viſit both by his *Prophets*, and by his *Angels*. Of this Nation

Nation ſprang our *Meſſias*, and the firſt *Doctors* of *Chriſtianity*: It is their *Tree* whereinto we are ingraffed: they are the *keepers* of *God's Oracles*, which we do reverence as much as they, and with St. *Paul* ſigh unto *God* for them, and pray that the day may quickly come, when the Vail being taken away which hangs over their Faces, they with us ſhall ſee the fulfilling of the *Law*; And when (as it is in their *Prophecies*) every one of us that are ſtrangers ſhall lay hold on the *Cloak* of him that is an *Hebrew*, deſiring that we may together with a pious conſent *worſhip* the only *true God*, who is the *God* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*.

SECT. II.

The Jews *ought to account the Miracles of* Chriſt *ſufficiently proved.*

FIRST of all then, we muſt intreat them not to think that to be unjuſt in another Man's caſe, which they judge to be juſt and *equitable* in their own. If any *Pagan* demand of them why they believe that *Miracles* were wrought by *Moſes*, they can give no other anſwer ſave that there was always ſo conſtant a report thereof among their Nation, that it could not but proceed from the *teſtimony* of ſuch as had *ſeen* the ſame.

Thus that the Widows Oyl was increaſed by *Eliſha*: that *Naaman* the *Syrian* was ſuddenly cured of the Leproſie: that the Womans Son in whoſe Houſe he lodged was reſtored to life, and

and other ſuch like, are believed by the *Jews* for no other reaſon than becauſe *witneſſes* of good credit have recorded to *poſterity*, that ſuch things were done. And they believe *Elias* his taking up into *heaven*, only for the ſingle teſtimony of *Eliſha*, as a Man beyond all exception. But we produce *twelve witneſſes* of unblameable life to teſtifie that *Chriſt* aſcended up into *Heaven*. And many more that ſaw him upon the Earth after his death. Which things if they be *true*, then neceſſarily *Chriſts doctrine* is *true* alſo; and indeed nothing at all can be alledged by the *Jews* for themſelves, which by equal right or more juſt title may not be applied to us alſo. But to omit further teſtimonies, it is the confeſſion of the Authors of the *Talmud*, and other *Jews* themſelves, that ſtrange *wonders* were wrought by *Chriſt*; which ought to ſuffice for this particular. For *God* cannot any way more effectually gain authority unto a doctrine publiſhed by Man, than by the working of *miracles*.

SECT. III.

And not believe that they were done by the help of Devils.

THESE *Miracles* of *Chriſt*, ſome ſaid, were done by the help of *Devils*. But this calumny hath been confuted before, when we ſhewed that whereſoever the *doctrine* of *Chriſt* was taught and known, there all power of the *Devils* was broken in pieces. Others reply that *Jeſus* learned *Magick arts* in *Egypt*: but this

ſlander hath no more, nay not ſo much *colour* of *truth*, than the like accuſation by the *Pagans* framed againſt *Moſes*, whereof we read in *Pliny* and *Apuleius*.

For, that ever *Jeſus* was in *Egypt* doth not appear, ſave only out of the Writings of his Diſciples: who add further, that he was an *Infant* when he returned thence. But it is certain by his own and others report, that *Moſes* lived a great part of his time after he was grown to Mans eſtate in *Egypt*. Howbeit the Law, as well of *Moſes*, as of *Chriſt*, frees them both from this crime, plainly forbidding ſuch *arts*, as abominable in the ſight of *God*. And without all queſtion, if in the time of *Chriſt* and his Diſciples, there had been either in *Egypt*, or any where elſe any ſuch *Magical art*, whereby Men might have been enabled to do the like *marvels* as are related of *Chriſt*; to wit, giving ſpeech to the Dumb on a ſudden, making the Lame to walk, and the Blind to ſee; then would *Tyberius*, *Nero*, and other *Emperors* have found it out, who ſpared no coſts and charges in the *inquiry* after ſuch like things.

Nay, if it were *true* which the *Jews* relate, how that the *Senators* of the great *Council* were skill'd in *Magick arts*, that they might convince them that were guilty of that *iniquity*; then ſurely, they being ſo mightily incenſed againſt *Jeſus*, as they were, and envying the honour and reſpect which he obtained chiefly by his *miracles*, would either themſelves have done the like *works* by the ſame art, or by ſufficient *reaſons* would have made it appear, that the *works* of *Chriſt* proceeded from no other cauſe.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Or by the Power of Words and Syllables.

MOreover, that is not only a meer fable but impudent lye, which ſome of the *Jews* have invented concerning the *Miracles* done by *Chriſt*, which they aſcribe to a certain *ſecret name*, which (as they ſay) being placed in the *Temple* by *Solomon*, was preſerved ſafe by two Lions, during the ſpace of One Thouſand Years and more, but afterward *ſtolen* away by *Jeſus*. For there is no mention made of thoſe *Lyons* (though it be a thing moſt remarkable and wonderful) either in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, or by *Joſephus*: nor was there any ſuch thing found by the *Romans*, who accompanying *Pompey*, entred into that *Temple*, before the times of *Jeſus*.

SECT. V.

The Miracles of Jeſus were divine, becauſe he taught the worſhip of one God the Maker of the World.

IT being then granted, as the *Jews* cannot deny, that *Wonders* were wrought by *Chriſt*, it will follow from the very *Law* of *Moſes*, that he muſt be *believed*. For *God* ſaith, *Deuter.* xviii. 15, &c. that *other Prophets after the time of Moſes*

ſhould be raiſed up of God, to whom the People ſhould be obedient, or otherwiſe become liable to grievous puniſhments. Now *miracles* are the moſt infallible *marks* of the *Prophets*: Nor can any more illuſtrious be ſo much as conceived. But in *Deuter.* xiii. it is ſaid, that if *any* profeſſing himſelf to be a *Prophet* doth work *wonders*, yet He muſt not be *believed*, if he go about to *entice* the People to a new worſhip of the *Gods*. For, though ſuch *miracles* be done, yet this is only by *God's permiſſion*, for trial, whether the People would perſiſt conſtantly in the *worſhip* of the *true God*. From which places compared together the *Hebrew Interpreters* do rightly collect, that every one muſt be believed that worketh *miracles*, unleſs thereby he intice Men from the *worſhip* of the true God; and in that caſe only *miracles* are not to be credited, though in ſhew moſt *glorious*. Now *Jeſus* did not only not teach the *worſhipping* of *falſe Gods*; but alſo expreſly condemned it as a moſt grievous crime, and taught us to *reverence* the *writings* both of *Moſes* and the *Prophets* that ſucceeded him. Wherefore there is nothing that can be objected againſt the *miracles* that were wrought by *Chriſt*.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

Anſwer to the Objection, taken from the difference between the Law of Moſes *and of Chriſt, where is ſhewn that a more perfect Law than that of* Moſes *might be given.*

AS touching that which ſome alledge, concerning the difference between the *law* of *Moſes* and the *law* of *Chriſt*, it is but of ſmall moment. For the *Hebrew Doctors* themſelves make this rule, that *by the authority of a Prophet, who worketh miracles, any precept whatſoever may be boldly violated and tranſgreſſed, except that only which concerns the worſhip of the true God.* And ſurely that power of making laws, which belonged unto *God* when he gave the commandments by the hand of *Moſes*, went not from him afterward: Neither can any Man that of his own right makes *laws*, be thereby hindred from making the contrary.

That which they object, that God then would be mutable, is nothing: for we ſpeak not here of *Gods nature* and eſſence, but of his *works*. Light is changed into darkneſs, youth into old age, ſummer into winter, and all by the *work* of *God*. Thus *God* at the beginning gave *Adam* leave in Paradiſe to eat of other apples, but he forbad him to eat of the fruit of one tree: Why? even becauſe it ſo *pleaſed him*. Generally he prohibited Men to kill others, yet he commanded *Abraham* to kill his Son. One while he forbad to offer *ſacrifices* apart from the *Tabernacle*, another while he admitted of them.

Neither will it follow, becauſe the *Law* which was given by *Moſes* was good, therefore no *better* could be given. Parents are wont to ſpeak half words and ſtutter with *Infants*; to wink at the *vices* of their *childhood*; and entice them to learn with a piece of Cake. But ſo ſoon as they come to riper age, their *ſpeech* is corrected, the precepts of *vertue* are inſtilled into them by degrees, and they are taught what is the beauty of *vertue*, what its rewards. Now it is plain that the precepts of that *law* of *Moſes* were not exactly *perfect*, becauſe many *holy Men* of thoſe times led a more excellent *life* than thoſe *commandments* required. Thus *Moſes*, who ſuffered the *revenge* of a wrong to be exacted partly by blows, and partly by ſentence of the Judges, himſelf being vexed with moſt bitter injuries, became an Interceſſor for his enemies. So *David* willing to have his rebellious *Son* to be ſpared, did patiently endure reproachful ſpeeches caſt upon himſelf. We no where read that any *good Men* put away their Wives, which notwithſtanding was permitted by the *law*. The reaſon of which is, that Laws are accommodated to the greater part of a People: therefore in the ſtate and condition they were in, it was meet ſomething ſhould be winked at; to be reduced to a more perfect Rule, when *God* by a greater *efficacy* of the *Spirit* was to chuſe unto himſelf a new *peculiar people* out of all Nations. Yea, all the rewards which are expreſly promiſed by the *law* of *Moſes*, belong only to this *mortal life*: wherefore it muſt be granted, that there might ſome better *law* be given, whereby the *reward* of *eternal happineſs* ſhould be promiſed, not under any ſhadows, but in plain and expreſs

expreſs terms: which we ſee is done by the *law* of *Chriſt*.

SECT. VII.

The Law of Moſes was obſerved by Jeſus, who aboliſhed no Commandments that were eſſentially good.

AND here by the way, for the conviction of the *Jews* iniquity, it muſt be noted, that they who lived in *Chriſt*'s time, uſed him moſt baſely, and puniſhed him moſt unjuſtly; when as there could no juſt *accuſation* be laid againſt him for tranſgreſſing the *Law*. He was circumciſed; he uſed the ſame food and apparel that the *Jews* uſed: thoſe that were healed of Leproſie, he ſent unto the *Prieſts*: The *Paſſeover* and other *Feſtival* days he religiouſly obſerved: Though he did *cure* ſome upon the *Sabbath day*; yet he ſhewed both by the *Law* and by the common received *opinions*, that ſuch works were not forbidden to be done upon the *Sabbath day*. Then it was, that he firſt began to publiſh the *abrogation* of ſome *Laws*, when after his triumph over Death he aſcended into Heaven, adorning his *Diſciples* upon Earth with illuſtrious gifts of the *holy Spirit*, whereby he made it evident that he had obtained a *regal power*, which includes in it the *authority* of making a *Law*: And that according to *Daniel*'s prophecie, *ch.* 3. *&* 7. compared with *ch.* 8. *&* 11. where he foretold, how that a little after the *deſtruction* of the Kingdoms of *Syria* and *Ægypt*, (the latter

whereof happened in the Reign of *Auguſtus*,) *GOD* would give the Kingdom to a *man* (who ſhould ſeem but a vulgar Perſon) over all Nations and Languages, which Kingdom ſhould never have an end.

Now that part of the *Law*, the *neceſſity* whereof was taken away by *Chriſt*, contained nothing that was *honeſt* in its own nature: but conſiſted of things that were indifferent in themſelves, and conſequently not *immutable*. For if thoſe things had had in them any thing of themſelves why they ſhould be done; then would *God* have preſcribed them not to *one*, but to *all* People; and not after that *mankind* had lived above the ſpace of Two Thouſand Years, but even from the beginning of all. Neither *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Melchiſedeck*, *Job*, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, or *Jacob*, (though all of them were *godly men*, and dearly beloved of *God*) knew *this part* of the *Law*, but were altogether ignorant, or very little acquainted therewith; yet notwithſtanding, for all that, they received the *teſtimony* of their *confidence* in *God*, and of *God*'s *love* unto them. Beſides, neither did *Moſes* exhort *Jethro* his Father in-law to the receiving of theſe *rites*, nor did *Jonah* the *Ninivites*, neither did any other *Prophets* reprehend the *Chaldæans*, *Ægyptians*, *Sydonians*, *Tyrians*, *Idumeans*, and *Moabites*, for not admitting thoſe *ceremonies*, though when they writ unto them, they reckoned up their *ſins* exactly enough. Theſe then were *peculiar* precepts introduced either for the avoiding of ſome evil, which the *Jews* were *prone* unto; or for the *trial* of their *obedience*, or for the *ſignification* of ſome *future* things.

Where-

Wherefore it is no more to be wondered, that *theſe* are *aboliſhed*, than if any King ſhould abrogate ſome *Municipal Statutes*, (which belong, that is, to particular Corporations) to the end he might eſtabliſh *one law* within his dominions. Neither can there any reaſon be alledged, to prove that *God* did ſo *bind* himſelf, as that he would *change* nothing of the ſame.

For if it be ſaid, that theſe precepts are called *perpetual*, the ſame *word* Men oftentimes uſe, when they would ſignifie that *that* which they command is not *yearly*, or accommodated to certain times, ſuppoſe of War, Peace, or Scarcity. Yet they are not thereby hindred from making new *conſtitutions* of the ſame things, ſpecially when the *publick good* requires it. Thus in like manner ſome of the Divine precepts given to the *Hebrews* were *temporary*, during the Peoples abode in the *Wilderneſs*: others were ſtrictly tied to their habitation in the Land of *Canaan*: therefore to diſtinguiſh theſe from the other, he calls them perpetual, whereby might be underſtood, that they ought not any where, or at any time to be *intermitted*, unleſs *God* ſignified that it was his *will* ſo to be. Which manner of ſpeaking, ſince it is commonly uſed by all *people*, ought to be leſs wondered at by the *Hebrews*: who know that in their Law it is called a *perpetual ſtatute*, and a *perpetual bondage*, which continues only from one *Jubilee* to another: And the coming of the *Meſſias* is called by them the accompliſhment of the *Jubilee*, or the greateſt *Jubilee* of all. Thus in the *Hebrew Prophets*, there was anciently a promiſe of making a *new covenant*, as in *Jerem.* xxxi. where God promiſeth that *he will make a new covenant, which ſhall be*

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put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts, neither ſhall men have any need, that one ſhall learn Religion of another, for it ſhall be manifeſt unto all. Yea further, *the Lord will forgive them their former iniquities, and will remember their ſin no more:* which is as if a King after great *enmity* and diſcord amongſt his Citizens and Subjects, ſhould for the eſtabliſhment of *peace* and tranquillity among them, take away all diverſity of Laws, and make one perfect *Law common* to them all, promiſing forgiveneſs of faults by-paſt, if hereafter they do amend. And this which hath been ſaid might ſuffice, but we will ſurvey every part of the Law which is abrogated, and ſhew they were neither ſuch as in themſelves could be well pleaſing unto *God*, nor ought they to *continue* for ever.

SECT. VIII.

As the Sacrifices, which of themſelves were never well-pleaſing unto God.

THE firſt and chief thing to be conſidered, are the *Sacrifices*, which many of the *Hebrews* think were invented by *Man*, before that they were commanded by *God*. And true it is indeed, the *Hebrews* were deſirous of abundance of Rites and Ceremonies, ſo that there was cauſe enough why GOD ſhould enjoyn them very many, if it were but for this reaſon, leſt they ſhould return unto the *worſhip* of *falſe Gods*, by the remembrance of their *ſojourning* in *Egypt*.

How-

Howbeit when their *Poſterity* made too great account of them, as though of themſelves they had been acceptable unto *God*, and a part of *true piety*; then did the *Prophets* reprehend them for it: About Sacrifices, ſaith God by *David*, in the fiftieth Pſalm, *I will not ſo much as exchange a word with thee; as if I were deſirous to have thy burnt-offerings continually before me. I will take no Bullock out of thy houſe, nor he-goats out of thy folds.*

For every beaſt of the foreſt is mine, and ſo are the cattel upon a thouſand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beaſts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the World is mine, and the fulneſs thereof: thinkeſt thou that I will eat the fleſh of Bulls, or drink the bloud of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the moſt high.

Some there are among the *Hebrews*, who ſay that this is ſpoken, becauſe they that offered thoſe *ſacrifices*, were of an *impure* mind, and diſhoneſt converſation. But the words now alledged ſhew *another matter*, to wit, that the *thing* in it ſelf was no whit acceptable unto *God*. For if we conſider the whole *ſeries* and *order* of the *Pſalm*, we ſhall find that *God* in theſe words ſpeaks unto the godly: for he had ſaid, *Gather my Saints together unto me*, and *hear my people*: which are the words of a Teacher and one that inſtructeth. Then having ended thoſe words now alledged, as his manner is, he ſpeaks unto the *wicked*: *But unto the wicked God ſaith.* To the ſame ſenſe we may cite other places, as in the 51. Pſal. *Thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it thee, but thou delighteſt not in burnt-offerings. The ſacrifice of God is a broken Spirit:*

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a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe. So likewiſe in the fortieth Pſalm; *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire, but haſt tied me to thee, as he whoſe ear was boared through, to be thy ſervant: burnt-offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required. Then ſaid I, Loe, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy Law is within my heart. I have preached righteouſneſs in the great Congregation: Loe, I have not refrained my Lips, O Lord, thou knoweſt. I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindneſs, and thy truth from the great Congregation.* The like we read in the Prophet *Iſaiah, chap.* 1. *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me, ſaith the Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beaſts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my Courts?* Anſwerable to this place, and the Interpreter of it, is that in *Jer.* 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael; Put your burnt-offerings unto your ſacrifices, and eat their fleſh your ſelves: For I ſpake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and ſacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, ſaying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my People: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.* Agreeing with this, is that in *Hoſea* 6. *To ſhew mercy to men, is more acceptable to me than ſacrifice, to think rightly of God more than all burnt-offerings.* Laſtly, in

in the ſixth of *Micah*, when the queſtion was made, what was the beſt way to obtain the favour of God? whether by coming before him with a great number of rams, or with a great quantity of Oyl, or with Calves of a Year old? to this *God* anſwers and ſaith, *I will tell thee what is truely good and acceptable unto me; namely, to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

By all which places it being apparent, that Sacrifices are not in the number of thoſe things which God deſires for themſelves or primarily; and that the People (a naughty ſuperſtition creeping in, as is uſual, by little and little among them) placed a great part of their piety in them, and believed they made a ſufficient compenſation for their ſins by ſacrifices: what wonder is it, if God at length took away a thing, which was not now in its own nature indifferent, but whoſe uſe was now become a Vice? ſince King *Hezekiah* did not ſtick to break even the brazen Serpent, erected by *Moſes*; becauſe the People began to honour it with Religious Worſhip.

Moreover, there are divers *Prophecies*, that foretold theſe *ſacrifices*, whereof we ſpeak, ſhould come to an end: which any one may eaſily conceive, who doth but conſider that according to the *Law* of *Moſes*, only the *poſterity* of *Aaron* was to do *ſacrifice*, and that only in their own Country. But in the 110 *Pſalm*, there is a *King* promiſed, whoſe *dominion* ſhould be moſt ample, the beginning whereof *ſhould be out of Sion*: and this ſame *King* was to be a *Prieſt alſo for ever, and that after the Order of Melchiſedeck*. So *Iſaiah* ſaith, *chap.* 19. *That there ſhall be an altar to the Lord in the midſt of the Land of Egypt,* where

where not only the *Ægyptians*, but the *Aſſyrians* alſo, and the *Iſraelites* ſhall worſhip *God*. And in the 66. *chapter*, he ſaith, that the People of all Nations and Languages which are far and widely diſtant, ſhall *come* as well as the *Iſraelites*, *and offer gifts unto God*, and of them alſo there ſhall *be ordained Prieſts and Levites*: All which could not come to paſs ſo long as the *Law* of *Moſes* remained in force. Add unto theſe that in the firſt of *Malachy* God foretelling future things, ſaith, he abhorred the offerings of the *Hebrews*, *I have no pleaſure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the riſing of the Sun even unto the going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name ſhall be great among the Heathen, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

Laſtly, *Daniel* in his 9. *chapter* rehearſing the *Prophecy* of the *Angel Gabriel* concerning Chriſt, ſaith, *that he ſhall cauſe the ſacrifice and the oblation to ceaſe.* And not by words only, but *really* and indeed *God* plainly enough ſhews that he likes not any longer thoſe *Sacrifices* which were preſcribed by *Moſes*, ſeeing that he hath ſuffered the *Jews* for the ſpace of one thouſand ſix hundred years and more to be without *Temple*, without *Altar*, and without any certain diſtinction of their Tribes or *Lineage*; whence it might appear who *they* are that may lawfully offer *ſacrifice*.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

The difference of Meats.

NOW what we have declared concerning the *Law* of *Sacrifices*, the ſame may be proved of that *Law* which forbids the *uſe of ſome kinds of meats*. For it is plain that after the great Deluge, God gave licence unto *Noah* and his Poſterity, to uſe any ſort of *victual*: Which Right therefore paſſed not only to *Japhet* and *Cham*, but alſo unto *Sem* and his Poſterity, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*. But afterward when the People being in *Egypt* were addicted to the naughty *ſuperſtitions* of that Countrey; then began God to forbid them the eating of ſome kind of *living creatures*; either becauſe the *Ægyptians* offered thoſe creatures unto their *Gods*, and made divination by them; or becauſe in that ceremonial *Law* Mens ſundry *vices* were ſhadowed out by divers kind of *living creatures*.

Again, that theſe *precepts* were not *univerſal*, it is manifeſt by that *ſtatute* which was made touching the *fleſh* of a Beaſt, that died of it ſelf, *Deut.* 14. which to eat was not *lawful* for the *Iſraelites*, but it was lawful for the *ſtrangers* that dwelt among them, unto whom the *Jews* by *divine* command were to perform all offices of *courteſie*, as perſons eſteemed by God. Likewiſe the ancient *Hebrew* Doctors do plainly teach, that in the time of the *Meſſias*, the Law concerning forbidden meats ſhould ceaſe: when the *Sow* ſhould be as clean and pure as the *Oxe*. And verily, in as much as *God* out of all Nations would collect

collect unto himself *one Church*, it was more just and equitable to have a *common liberty* than a *bondage* in such things.

SECT. X.

And of Days.

IT follows, that we consider of *Festival* Days: all which were instituted and ordained in remembrance of that benefit received of *God*, when they were *freed* from *Egyptian calamity*, and afterward brought into the *promised Land*. Now the Prophet *Jeremy*, in the 16. and 23. Chapters, saith, *that the time would come when more new and greater benefits should so obscure the remembrance of that benefit, as that afterward there should scarce be any mention thereof.* Besides, that which but now was said concerning *Sacrifices* is true also of *Festival* Days; the People began to *put confidence* in them, thinking that if they kept and *observed them well*, it was no matter though they *transgressed* in other matters: whereupon in the first Chapter of *Isaiah*, *God* saith, that his Soul hated their *new Moons*, and *appointed Feasts*, and that they were such a *trouble* unto him, as that he was *weary* to bear them. More particularly it is objected concerning the *Sabbath*, that the *law* thereof is *universal* and *perpetual*, because it was not given to one peculiar People only, but to *Adam* the Parent of all Mankind at the very beginning of the World. I answer with the most learned of the *Hebrews*, that there is a twofold *precept* concerning the *Sabbath*, the first is a *precept*

cept for *commemoration*, *Exod.* 20. 8. and the second is a *precept* for *observation*, *Exod.* 31. 31. The former is fulfilled by a religious *remembrance* of the Worlds *creation*: and the latter consists in an exact *refraining* from all kinds of other labour. The former was given from the beginning, which doubtless those *godly men* before the Law did obey, to wit, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. The last of which, though they travelled much, as we read, yet there is no where the least sign or remembrance of their intermitting their journey for the *Sabbath*; which after they came out of *Egypt* you shall always meet with. For after that the People were brought out of *Egypt*, and had happily passed over the *red Sea*, the next day they celebrated a *Sabbath* of *rest* and *safety*; wherein they sang a *Song* of *triumph* and rejoycing: from which time that *exact rest* upon the *Sabbath* was commanded, which is first mentioned upon occasion of gathering the *Manna*, *Exod.* 16. 23. *Exod.* 35. 2. *Levit.* 23. 3. And in this sense the deliverance from *Egypt* is made the reason for the Law of the *Sabbath*, *Deut.* 5. 15. By which *Law* provision also was made for *servants* against the severity of those *masters*, that would not grant them any rest or relaxation from *daily labour*, as may be seen in the places aforesaid. It is true indeed, *strangers* were bound to observe this *Law*, because it was meet there should be one *form* of *rest* among all the People; but this *Law* of so exact *resting* upon the *Sabbath* was not given to other People, as may appear by this, that in many places it is called a *sign*, and a special *covenant* also between *God* and the *Israelites*, as in *Exod.* 31. 13. *and* 16. Now we have proved

before by the *promiſe* of far greater *benefits*, that the *ordinances* which were inſtituted for a *memorial* of the coming out from *Egypt*, were not *ſuch* as ought *never* to ceaſe. Add moreover, if the *Law* concerning the *reſt* upon the *Sabbath* had been given from the beginning, and in that ſenſe, that it never might be aboliſhed; then ſurely that Law had prevailed over other laws, when there was a claſhing between them: which we find was quite contrary, by its yielding to them. For it is evident, that Infants were rightly *circumciſed* upon the *Sabbath*; like, as during the time that the *Temple* ſtood, there were Beaſts killed for *ſacrifice*, as well upon the *Sabbath*, as upon other days. Yea, the *Hebrew* Maſters themſelves ſhew the mutability of this *law*, when they ſay, that by a *Prophet*'s appointment and *command* a work may be rightly done upon the *Sabbath*-day: And this they prove by the taking of *Jerico* upon the *Sabbath*, according to the commandment of *Joſhuah*. And ſome of them not unfitly ſhew, that the diſtinction of days ſhall be taken away in the time of the *Meſſias*, from that place in *Iſaiah*, lxvi. 23. where it is propheſied, *It ſhall come to paſs that the worſhip of God ſhall be perpetual from one new Moon to another, from one Sabbath to another.*

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Alſo of outward Circumciſion.

IN the next place let us come to *Circumciſion*, which certainly is Elder than *Moſes*: For it was given in command to *Abraham* and his *Poſterity*.

Howbeit the commandment thereof was the introduction or beginning of the *covenant* publiſhed by *Moſes*: For thus we read, that God ſpake unto *Abraham*, *Gen.*17. ſaying, *I will give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a ſtranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an everlaſting poſſeſſion, and I will be their God. And God ſaid unto Abraham, Thou ſhalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee: every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.* But now we know by what hath been already ſaid, that in the place of this *covenant*, a *new covenant* was to ſucceed, which ſhould be common to all People: For which cauſe the neceſſity of that note of *diſtinction*, ought to ceaſe. Beſides, in the *precept* of *circumciſion* there was a *myſtical* and more excellent *ſignification* contained, which the *Prophets* do plainly ſhew in that they command the *circumciſion* of the *heart*, which all the commandments of *Jeſus* aim at.

Wherefore the *promiſes* alſo annexed to *circumciſion*, are in like manner to be referred to ſome greater thing: As that of *earthly poſſeſſions*, to the revelation of a poſſeſſion truly eternal; which was never made more manifeſt than by *Jeſus*: So that promiſe of making *Abraham a Fa-*

ther of many Nations, hath reference to that *time*, when not a few, but an infinite number of People diſperſed thorowout the whole World, ſhould imitate *Abraham*'s Faith and confidence in *God*, which is ſo often mentioned in Scripture; and this never came to paſs, but in the time of the *Goſpel*. Now it is no marvel, if the *ſhadows of an intended work* be taken away, when the *matter* it ſelf is accompliſht. Laſtly, that the *grace* of *God* was not tied to this *ſign*, we may eaſily diſcern, becauſe not only the more *ancient*, but *Abraham* himſelf having not as yet received *circumciſion*, *pleaſed God*: The *Hebrews* alſo, during all the time of their journey through the Deſarts of *Arabia*, omitted *circumciſion*, and yet *God* found no fault with them for it.

SECT. XII.

And yet the Apoſtles of Jeſus were gentle in the toleration of theſe things.

NO doubt but the *Hebrews* had cauſe to yield many thanks to *Jeſus* and his *Ambaſſadors*, for that by *Chriſt* they might be freed from that heavy yoke of *ceremonies*, and be aſſured of this their freedom both by *gifts* and *miracles*, ſuch as were not inferiour to thoſe that were wrought by *Moſes*.

And yet the firſt Publiſhers of our *Chriſtian doctrine* did not exact ſo much of them as to acknowledge this their *happineſs*: But if they would admit of the *Commandments* of *Chriſt*, which were full of all *honeſty*; they eaſily ſuffered them to

to follow what courſe of life they pleaſed in matters of *indifferency*: Yet ſo, that upon *ſtrangers* (to whom this *law* of *rites* was never given) they ſhould not impoſe a neceſſity of obſerving them. Which one thing is ſufficient to make it plainly appear, that the *Jews* do unjuſtly reject the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, under that pretence of the *ceremonial Law*. Having then anſwered this Objection, which chiefly is alledged againſt the *miracles* of *Jeſus*: we will now come to other *arguments*, which may fitly ſerve for the conviction of the *Jews*.

SECT. XIII.

A Proof againſt the Jews, from the promiſed Meſſias.

IT is agreed upon between *us* and the *Jews*, that in the *predictions* of the *Prophets*, above many other *authors* and *donors of great good things* to the *Hebrews*, there was *one man* promiſed far more *excellent* than the reſt: whom they call by a Name common to others, but in the higheſt ſenſe of it, belonging to him alone, the MESSIAS. This *Meſſias* we ſay is come long ago, but they expect him as yet for to come. It remains then that we ſeek for a deciſion of this controverſie out of thoſe Books, the *authority* whereof we both do joyntly acknowledge.

SECT. XIV.

Who is proved to be already come, by the limited time of his coming, which was foretold.

THE Prophet *Daniel*, to whom *Ezekiel* hath given a Teſtimony of exceeding great Piety, neither would willingly *deceive* us, nor was himſelf *deceived* by the Angel *Gabriel*. Now He, taught by the ſame *Angel*, in the Ninth Chapter of his *Prophecie* hath left it recorded, that before *five hundred* years ſhould be expired, after the promulgation of the *decree* touching the reſtoring of the City *Hieruſalem*, the *Meſſias* ſhould come. But now ſince that time above *two thouſand* years have paſſed; and yet he, whom the *Jews* expect, is not come: neither can they name any other *perſon*, to whom that ſpace or *time* can be rightly applyed; which agrees ſo fitly unto *Jeſus*, that *Nehumias* an *Hebrew* Doctor, who lived about *Fifty Years* before *Chriſt*, plainly ſaid then; that the time of the *Meſſias* foretold by *Daniel* could not be protracted beyond thoſe *Fifty Years* then next enſuing. And with this note of *time*, agrees another *note* which we have touch't before; concerning the eſtabliſhing of a dominion over all Nations by a Divine authority, after that the *poſterity* of *Seleucus* and *Ptolomy* had ceaſed to reign; the latter whereof ended in *Cleopatra*, a little before *Jeſus* was born. The third *note* is ſet down in the foreſaid *ix.* Chapter of *Daniel*; namely, that after the coming of the *Meſſias*, the City of *Hieruſalem* ſhould be overthrown: which *Prophecy* of the Citie's

Citie's deſtruction, *Joſephus* himſelf referreth unto *his time*; whence it follows, that the *time* appointed for the coming of the *Meſſias*, was then already paſt. Hereunto likewiſe belongs that in the ſecond Chapter of the Prophet *Haggai*, where God by the Prophet comforteth *Zerubbabel, the Son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah, and Joſhuah the Son of Joſedech the high Prieſt*, who were ſorrowful to ſee the Temple, which they built, fall ſo ſhort of the firſt Temple; with this promiſe, *that the glory of the latter houſe ſhould be greater than the former*: which certainly can neither be meant of the *greatneſs* of the work, nor of the *matter* of the building, nor of the fabrick and artificial *ſtructure*, nor of the ornaments of that Temple; as may appear by the *hiſtory* of thoſe times, both in the Holy *Scriptures*, and in *Joſephus*, compared with that of the Temple of *Solomon*. Add to this, that the *Hebrew* Doctors note, this latter Temple wanted *two* of the greateſt indowments, which the former enjoyed, *viz.* A certain *conſpicuous Light*, which was the token of the Divine Majeſty there, and *Divine Inſpiration*. But God himſelf briefly declares, in that very place, wherein the latter Temple ſhould excel the former; when He promiſes He would ſettle, as by a ſure Covenant, *His Peace*, i. e. his favour and loving kindneſs, in that Temple. Which the Prophet *Malachi* declares more largely in his Third Chapter; *Behold, I will ſend my meſſenger, who ſhall prepare my ways. There ſhall ſhortly come into his Temple* (now *Malachi* lived when the latter Temple was built) *that Lord whom ye deſire; even that meſſenger of the Covenant, who is your delight*. Wherefore the *Meſſias* ought to come while the ſecond

Temple ſtood, which in the account of the *Hebrews*, comprehends all that time which was between *Zerubbabel* and *Veſpaſian*: for in the time of *Herod* the *Great*, the Temple was not *re-edified* out of its old ruines, but by little and little it was *repaired*, bearing ſtill the name of the ſame Temple. And indeed there was ſo firm an opinion amongſt the *Hebrews*, and the neighbouring People, that the *Meſſias* was ſurely to come in thoſe times, that many took *Herod*, others *Judas Gaulonites*, and a third ſort others that lived about the times of *Jeſus*, to be the *Meſſias*.

SECT. XV.

Anſwer to that, which ſome conceive, touching the deferring of his coming, for the ſins of the People.

SOME of the *Jews*, perceiving themſelves to be hard put to it, by theſe *Arguments*, concerning the *coming* of the *Meſſias*, go about to ſhift them off, by telling us, that *their ſins* were the cauſe why he did not come at the promiſed time. But (to omit that thoſe Prophecies expreſs a Decree determined, not ſuſpended upon any condition) how is it poſſible, that this *coming* ſhould be deferred, by reaſon of their ſins, when this alſo was foretold, that becauſe of the many and hainous *tranſgreſſions* of the People, the great *City* ſhould be laid waſte a little after the times of the *Meſſias*? Moreover, one reaſon of the *Meſſias* his coming, was,

to

to cure a moſt corrupted World, and together with rules for amendment of life, to bring a pardon for ſins paſt. Whence it is that *Zachariah* ſaith, concerning his times, Chap. xiii. that *there ſhould be then a fountain opened to the houſe of David, and to the Inhabitants of Hieruſalem, for to waſh away ſin and uncleanneſs.* And it is affirmed by the *Hebrews* themſelves, that the *Meſſiah* ſhall be called *Iſchcopher*, that is, a Reconciler or Expiator of ſins. But it is againſt all reaſon, to ſay, that any thing was deferred, becauſe of that *diſeaſe*, for which it was preciſely deſtinated and appointed.

SECT. XVI.

Alſo from the preſent ſtate of the Jews, compared with thoſe things which the Law promiſeth.

TOuching this which we affirm, of the coming of the *Meſſias* long ſince into the World, the *Jews* are convinced by *very ſence*. *God* made a Covenant with *Moſes*, and promiſed to them the happy poſſeſſion of the Land of *Paleſtine*, ſo long as they ſhould lead their life according to the *commandments* of the *Law*: But contrarily he threatned *baniſhment*, and ſuch like *calamities* to come upon them, if they did grievouſly tranſgreſs the ſame. Yet, if at any time when they were oppreſſed with *miſeries*, they *repenting* of their ſins, returned unto *obedience*; then would he be *moved* to have mercy upon the People, and cauſe, that though they were ſcattered to the utter-

uttermoſt parts of the Earth, yet ſhould they return again into their own *Countrey*, as we may read, in *Deut.* 30. and *Nehem.* 1. and elſewhere. But now for the ſpace of *one thouſand five hundred years* and more, the *Jews* have wanted a *Countrey* and a *Temple*: And when they have attempted to build a new one, they have been always hindred: even by Balls of Fire breaking out in the Foundations, and overthrowing the work; as *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Writer, who was not a Chriſtian, reports. When this People in times paſt had defiled themſelves with abominable wickedneſſes, commonly ſacrificing even their *children* unto *Saturn*, accounting *adultery* to be no ſin, oppreſſing and ſpoiling the Fatherleſs and Widows, and ſhedding the innocent bloud in great abundance, all which the Prophets upbraid them with; then did they *ſuffer exile*, yet not longer than for the ſpace of *ſeventy years*, during which time alſo, *God* did not neglect to *ſpeak* unto them by his Prophets, and to *comfort* them with the *hope* of a return, pointing alſo at the very time thereof. But now, ever ſince they were expelled out of their *Countrey*, they continue *baniſhed* and contemptible: No *Prophet* comes unto them: there is no ſign or token of their return. Their Maſters and Ring-leaders (as if they were blaſted with the *ſpirit* of *giddineſs*,) are fallen away to filthy fables and doctrines very ridiculous, wherewith the *books* of the *Talmud* do abound: which they are bold to call *the law given by word of mouth*, and are wont to *equal* or prefer to that which was written by *Moſes*. For ſuch things as are therein to be read concerning *God*'s weeping and lamenting, becauſe he had ſuffered the *City* to be deſtroyed;

destroyed; of his daily care and diligence in reading the *Law*; of *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, and many other matters, are so absurd, that it would be irksome even to repeat them. Howbeit the *Jews* in all this time have neither turned to the worship of *false Gods*, as they did in times past; neither have they *defiled* themselves with bloody murders, nor are they accused of *adulteries*: But by prayers and fastings they *labour* to appease *God*'s wrath, and yet are not heard. Which things being so, one of these two must needs be granted; namely, that either the *covenant* that was given by *Moses* is quite abolished; or the whole body of the *Jewish* Nation lies under the guilt of some notorious *crime*, which hath continued for so many Ages together: which what it is, let themselves speak; or if they cannot tell, then let them *believe us*, that this sin is no other, but the *contempt* of the *Messias*, who was come before that these *evils* began to fall upon them.

SECT. XVII.

Jesus is proved to be the Messias, by those things which were foretold concerning the Messias.

BY this which hath been spoken, it is manifest that the Messias came many Ages ago: we add further, that he is no other but *Jesus*. For what other persons soever either were, or would have been accounted the Messias, they have left

left no *Sect* behind them to uphold and maintain that opinion. There are not any at this day that profeſs themſelves to be followers either of *Herod*, or of *Judas Caulonita*, or of that great Impoſtor *Barchochebas*, who living in the times of *Adrian*, ſaid, that he was the Meſſias, and deceived ſome, even of the moſt learned. But thoſe that profeſs the name of *Jeſus*, have continued from the time that he lived upon Earth, even until this day, and are ſtill not a few only in this or that Countrey, but very many diſperſed, as far as the World extendeth. I could alledge many other *teſtimonies* anciently foretold or believed concerning the *Meſſias*, which we believe were accompliſhed in *Jeſus*, ſince they are not ſo much as affirmed of any other: as namely, that he came of the *poſterity* of *David*, and was born of a *Virgin*; which was divinely revealed to him that married that *Virgin*; when he would have put her away, ſuppoſing ſhe had been got with child by another; Alſo that this *Meſſias* was born at *Bethlehem*, and began firſt to publiſh his *doctrine* in *Galilee*, healing all kinds of Diſeaſes, giving ſight to the *blind*, and making the *lame* to walk: but this one may ſuffice for many, the effect of which continues unto this day. It is moſt manifeſt by the *Prophecies* of *David*, *Iſaiah*, *Zachariah*, and *Hoſea*, that the *Meſſias* was to be an *Inſtructor*, not only of the *Jews*, but alſo of the *Gentiles*: that by him the worſhip of falſe Gods ſhould fall to the ground, and a huge multitude of *aliens* and *ſtrangers* ſhould be brought to the *worſhip* of the only *true God*. Before *Jeſus* his coming almoſt the whole World was overſpread with falſe *worſhips* and *religions*: which afterward by little and little began

began to *vaniſh* away, and not only ſingle perſons, but both People and Kings were converted unto the *worſhip* and ſervice of one *God*. This was not owing to the *Jewiſh Rabbins*; but to the Diſciples of *Jeſus* and their Succeſſors. Thus *they* were made the People of *God*, that before were not the People of *God*; and the ſaying of old *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. was fulfilled, That before all civil Authority ſhould be taken from *Judah*, *Shilo* ſhould come. Which the *Chaldee*, and other Interpreters expound of the *Meſſias*, to whom even foreign Nations ſhould be obedient.

SECT. XVIII.

Anſwer to that which is objected, of ſome things that are not fulfilled.

THE *Jews* uſually object, that *ſome things* were foretold, concerning the times of the Meſſias, which are not yet fulfilled. But for anſwer, *thoſe matters* which they alledge are obſcure, and admit of divers *ſignifications*: wherefore we ought not, becauſe of them, to forſake thoſe things that are manifeſt. Such as the *holineſs* of the *commandments* of *Jeſus*; the excellency of the *reward*, and the perſpicuous *language*, wherein it is propounded: to which if we add the *teſtimony* of his miracles, theſe ought to be ſufficient inducements to the receiving of his *doctrine*. As for thoſe *Prophecies* which go under the name of a ſhut or claſped Book, oftentimes for the right underſtanding thereof, there is requiſite ſome *divine helps* and *aſſiſtances*, which they are worthily deprived of, that neglect

mani-

manifeſt *truths*. The places of *Scripture* which they object are diverſly expounded, as themſelves cannot deny. And if any Men pleaſe to compare either the ancient Interpreters, which lived when the People were led Captive into *Babylon*, or ſuch as lived about Chriſt's time, with thoſe that writ after that *Chriſtianity* began to be hateful and odious unto the *Jews*, he ſhall find new *expoſitions* purpoſely invented, to croſs thoſe former, that well agreed with the ſenſe of *Chriſtians*. They know well enough that there are many things in the Holy Scriptures, which muſt be underſtood by a figure, and not in propriety of ſpeech; as when *God* is ſaid to have deſcended; and to have a mouth, ears, eyes and noſtrils. And why may not we likewiſe expound divers things, that are ſpoken of the *times* of the *Meſſias*, after the ſame manner; as that the *Wolf* ſhall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard ſhall lye down with the Kid*, and the *Calf* and the *young Lion*, and the *fatling* together; and the *ſucking child* ſhall play with the *Serpents*: and the *mountain* of the Lord ſhall be exalted above other mountains, whither *ſtrangers* ſhall come and *worſhip*.

There are ſome things *promiſed*, which by antecedent or conſequent words, or by the very ſenſe imply *a tacite condition* in them. Thus *God* promiſed many things unto the *Hebrews* upon condition they would receive the Meſſias that was ſent, and obey him: which ſame things, if they come not to paſs accordingly, then may they blame themſelves that are the cauſe thereof.

Again, other matters were *promiſed determinedly* and without all condition; which if they be not already accompliſhed, yet may *be hoped* for

for hereafter. For it is evident, even among the *Jews*, that the time or *Kingdom* of the Meſſias muſt endure unto the end of the World.

SECT. XIX.

And to that which is objected, of the mean condition and death of Jeſus.

MANY do take exception at the low and *mean condition* of *Jeſus*: but unjuſtly, becauſe in *ſacred Writ* it is often ſaid, that *God will exalt the humble, but caſt down the proud. Jacob*, when he paſſed over *Jordan*, carried nothing with him, ſave his *ſtaff* only; and yet returned enriched with a great flock of ſheep.

Moſes was a poor *exile*, and feeding the flocks, when *God* appeared to him in the *buſh*, and gave him commiſſion for the conduct of his People. *David* alſo was called to his Kingdom, when he was *feeding ſheep*, and with many other ſuch like *examples* doth the Sacred ſtory abound. Now concerning the *Meſſias*, we read, that he ſhould be a gladſome *Meſſenger* unto the poor, that he ſhould make no noiſe in publick, nor uſe any ſtrife and contention, but deal *gently*, forbearing to break the ſhaken reed, and cheriſhing that heat which remains in ſmoaking flax.

Neither ought the reſt of his *afflictions*, no not his *ignominious death*, to make him deſpicable to any. For *God* oftentimes ſuffereth the *godly*, not only to be vexed and diſquieted by the *wicked*, as righteous *Lot* was by the Citizens of *Sodom*: but alſo even to be *deſtroyed* and ſlain, as is plain

plain by the example of *Abel*, who was cruelly *murdered* by his Brother; of *Isaiah*, who was *sawn* in pieces; and of the *seven brethren* in the *Maccabees*, who, together with their *mother*, were miserably tormented and put to death. The very *Jews* themselves sing the *Seventy ninth Psalm*, wherein are these words, *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven: the flesh of those whom thou lovest, O God, unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.* And whosoever considers the words of *Isaiah*, in the 53. Chapter, cannot deny that the *Messias* himself ought to have passed thorow much *affliction* and death, to come into his Kingdom, and obtain power to *adorn* his Houshold or Church with the most excellent blessings.

The words in the *Prophet* are these; *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground: He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs: And we hide as it were our faces from him. He was so despised, and in so small esteem among us. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way: And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He*

was

was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he openeth not his mouth. After impriſonment and ſentence paſſed on him, he was taken away: but who ſhall worthily declare his duration when he was reſtored to life again? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; but for the tranſgreſſion of my people he was ſtricken; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: though he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. But though it hath pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, and he hath put him to grief; Yet becauſe he made himſelf an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days; and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied: by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtifie many; by taking away their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong: becauſe he hath poured out his ſoul unto death. And he was numbred with the tranſgreſſors, and he bare the ſin of many, and made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors. Who is there either among the *Kings* or *Prophets*, to whom theſe things can be applied? Surely none. As touching that *ſhift*, which ſome later *Jews* have invented, telling us, that the *Prophet* ſpeaks here of the *Hebrews* diſperſed thorow all *Nations*; that, by their example and perſwaſion, they might every where make many Proſelytes: this ſenſe is firſt of all repugnant to many teſtimonies of holy Writ, which loudly proclaim, that no evil is befaln the *Jews*, which they have not deſerved (and a great deal more beſide) for their evil deeds. He alſo, of whom

Esaias treats, was to deprecate God for the Heathen, which the *Jews* do not. And lastly, the very order and series of the Prophetical discourse, will not bear that interpretation. For either the *Prophet*, (which seems *more proper* to that place) or *God* saith; *This evil hapned unto him for the iniquities of my People.* Now the *people* of *Isaiah*, or the *peculiar people* of *God*, are the *people* of the *Hebrews*; therefore he who is said by *Isaiah* to have suffered such grievous things, cannot be that same People.

But the ancient *Doctors* of the *Hebrews* more ingenuously *confess*, that these things were spoken of the *Messias*; whereupon some later among them have devised two *Messiases*; the one they call the Son of *Joseph*, who was to suffer many miseries, and a bloody death: the other is the Son of *David*, to whom all things should succeed prosperously. When it would be far more easie and more consonant with the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, to acknowledge but *one Messias*, who was to pass unto his Kingdom, through many *difficulties* and *death* it self; which *we believe* of *Jesus*, and the thing it self declares to be *most true.*

SECT. XX.

And, as though they were honest men that put him to death.

MANY of the *Jews* are kept back from receiving the Religion of *Jesus* by a certain preconceived opinion of the *vertue* and *honesty*

honeſty of their *Anceſtors*, and ſpecially of the *Prieſts*, who out of prejudice condemned *Jeſus*, and rejected his *Doctrine*. But what kind of Men their Anceſtors oft-time were, (that they may not think I defame them) let them hear the words of their own *Law* and *Prophets*, wherein they are often called *uncircumciſed in heart and ears, a people that honoured God with their lips, and with the garniſh of Ceremonies; but their hearts were far from him.* It was their *Anceſtors* that went about, and were very near to have kill'd their brother *Joſeph*; and, in very deed, ſold him into *bondage*. It was their *Anceſtors* alſo, that by their continual mutinies and ſeditions, made *Moſes* weary of his life, who was their *Leader* and *Redeemer*, whom the Earth, the Sea, and the Air obeyed. Theſe were they that *loathed* the Bread that was ſent from *Heaven*; complaining, as though they had been in greateſt want and ſcarcity, even when they belched up again the Fowl that they had eaten. It was their *Anceſtors* that forſaking *David* ſo excellent and good a *King*, followed *Abſolon* his rebellious Son. It was their *Anceſtors* that ſlew *Zachariah*, the Son of *Jehojada*, in the moſt holy place, making their *Prieſt* himſelf a Sacrifice of their cruelty. Now, as concerning the *Chief Prieſts*, they were ſuch as *conſpired* the death of *Jeremy* by a falſe accuſation, and had kill'd him indeed, unleſs they had been hindered by the authority of ſome of the Nobles: Notwithſtanding which, they prevailed ſo far, as to have him impriſoned until the very moment that the *City* was taken. If any Man imagine thoſe were any thing better, that lived in the times of *Jeſus*, *Joſephus* will ſhew him his *error*; who deſcribes their villanous

acts, and grievous punishments, such, as the like were never heard of, and yet, as he thinks, below their desert. Neither may we conceive more favourably of their *great Council* or *Senate*; specially, because at that time the *Senators* were not chosen after the old custom, by laying on of hands, but by the pleasure, or sway of powerful Men: as the High-Priests also were not elected for term of life, but obtained that dignity only from year to year, and that oftentimes for *money*. We need not then wonder, if Men that were puffed up with pride, unsatiable in their *ambition* and *covetousness*, did break out into fury and madness, when they beheld a *Man*, that by his holy *precepts* and upright *behaviour*, reproved their far different *life* and vitious *conversation*. Neither was there any other thing laid to his charge, but what the best of Men had been accused of long before. Thus that *Micaiah*, that lived in the time of *Jehosaphat*, was cast into Prison, because he boldly spake the *truth* against Four hundred *lying Prophets*. *Ahab* upbraided *Elijah*, just as the *Priests* did *Jesus*, saying, that he was *the man that troubled the peace of Israel*. So likewise *Jeremy* was accused, as well as *Jesus*, for propheſying against the *Temple*. Add moreover what the ancient *Doctors* of the *Hebrews* foretold, how that in the times of the *Messias*, Men should be as *impudent as Dogs, as stubborn as Asses, and as cruel as wild Beasts*. God himself, foreseeing long before, how most of the *Jews* would stand affected in the time of the *Messias*, said, it would come to pass, that *they* should become his *people*, who were not his *people*; and of all the Cities and Towns of the *Jews*, scarce one or two would go to the *holy Mountain*: How-

beit,

beit, that which was wanting in *their number*, ſhould be ſupplyed by *ſtrangers*: Alſo that the *Meſſias* ſhould be a *downfal* to the *Hebrews*: and this Stone which the Builders refuſed, ſhould be put in the *chief place* for the joyning together of the *work*.

SECT. XXI.

Anſwer to the Objection, that many Gods are worſhipped by the Chriſtians.

THERE remain yet two accuſations to be anſwered, which the *Jews* bring both againſt our *Chriſtian Doctrine* and *Worſhip*. The firſt is, in that they ſay, we *Chriſtians* do *worſhip* many *Gods*.

But we anſwer, that this is nothing but a wreſted explication of another's opinion, out of hatred. For, why ſhould this be more objected againſt us *Chriſtians*, than againſt *Philo* the *Jew*, who oftentimes makes *three* to be in *God*; and calls the *reaſon* or the *word* of *God*; *the name of God*, the *maker* of the World; neither *unbegotten*, as is *God* the Father of all, nor ſo begotten as Men are? Whom both *Philo*, and *Moſes* the Son of *Nachman*, call alſo the Angel or Ambaſſador, who takes care of the Univerſe: Or againſt the *Cabaliſts*, who diſtinguiſh *God* into three *lights*, which ſome of them call by the ſame names that *Chriſtians* do; to wit, of the *Father*, of the *Son* or the word, and of the *Holy Ghoſt*. And let me not omit what is agreed upon by all the *Hebrews*, that the Spirit wherewith the *Prophets*

were moved and inſpired, is not any created thing, and yet it is diſtinguiſhed from the *ſender* thereof: as alſo that which they commonly call *ſchechina*. Now many of the *Hebrews* have taught, that that *divine power* which they term *wiſdom*, ſhall dwell in the *Meſſias*; whence by the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, the *Meſſias* is called the *Word* of *God*: as by *David*, *Eſaias*, and others, He is honoured with that auguſt Name, of GOD and LORD.

SECT. XXII.

And that a humane nature is worſhipped.

WITH like facility may we anſwer the *other Objection*, which they alledge againſt us, ſaying, that we exhibit unto the *creature* that *worſhip* and *honour*, which is due unto *God* the *Creator*. For we ſay, that no other honour or *worſhip* is given by us unto the *Meſſias*, than is required by the *ſecond*, and the *hundred and tenth Pſalms*. The former whereof, after a ſort, was fulfilled in *David*, but after a more excellent manner belongs unto the *Meſſias*, as *David Kimchi* himſelf, a great adverſary of *Chriſtians*, doth acknowledge. And the latter can be expounded of no other, but of the *Meſſias*. For that which ſome later *Jews* have deviſed of *Abraham*, *David*, and *Hezekiah*, is but vain and frivolous. The ſaid *Pſalm* is *David*'s, as the *Hebrew Inſcription* doth ſhew: That then, which *David* ſaith, was ſaid unto *his Lord*, can neither be applyed to *David* himſelf, nor to *Hezekiah*; who

who amongſt *David*'s Poſterity did excel *David* in nothing. And *Abraham* had no ſingular *Prieſthood*, but was bleſſed of *Melchiſedeck*, as the leſs of the greater. Likewiſe that which follows concerning the Scepter, that ſhould go out of *Sion*, and come to the uttermoſt Coaſts, doth plainly appertain unto the *Meſſias*, as is manifeſt by other like places, which doubtleſs are meant of the *Meſſias*; Nor did the more ancient *Hebrews* and Paraphraſts otherwiſe underſtand it. Now I may as well believe upon the bare credit of his Diſciples, becauſe of their moſt eminent integrity and honeſty, that it is *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, in whom properly theſe things are fulfilled; as the *Jews* believe *Moſes* in thoſe matters, which without any other witneſs, himſelf affirmed were delivered to him of *God*. But beſides this, there are many and moſt forcible *arguments* of that moſt excellent power, which we ſay *Jeſus* hath obtained; As namely, in that he was ſeen of many, after he was riſen from the dead: And many beheld him when he was taken up into *Heaven*: *Devils* alſo were caſt out, and *diſeaſes* were cured only by his *name*: The gifts of *Tongues* were given to his Diſciples; which *Jeſus* himſelf promiſed ſhould be *ſigns* of his Kingdom.

Add unto theſe, that his *Scepter*, that is, the Word of the Goſpel being gone out of *Sion*, is run through the World (and that not by humane help, but by the Divine Power alone) to the utmoſt parts of the Earth: whoſe people and their Kings He hath ſubdued to himſelf; juſt as the *Pſalms* did plainly foretel. The *Jewiſh Cabaliſts* place a certain Son of *Enoch* in the middle, between God and Men; without any indication

of such a power: with how much better reason do we give Him that dignity, who hath so evidently demonstrated that it belongs to Him?

Neither doth this tend, in the least, to the diminution or lessening of the glory of God the Father: from whom this power of *Jesus* doth proceed; to whom it must return; and to whose honour also it ministers and serves.

SECT. XXIII.

The Conclusion of this part, with Prayer for the Jews.

BUT it is not our purpose in this Work, to make any further curious inquiry into these matters: neither had we spoken hereof, but only to shew, that there is no wicked or absurd *point* in our *Christian doctrine*, which any one can pretend, why he should not embrace a *Religion*, which is beautified and confirmed with so many *wonders*; commands such honest things; and promises such excellent *rewards*. For he that hath once received and embraced the same, must for further *instruction* in special and particular *questions*, consult those *Books*, wherein, as we have formerly declared, the points of *Christian Religion* are contained; which that it may come to pass, we beseech the *Almighty* to *illuminate* the hearts and minds of the *Jews* with the brightness of his *truth*, and to make those prayers effectual which *Christ* himself uttered for them, even while he was hanging upon the *Cross*.

The

The Sixth Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A confutation of Mahumetaniſm; the beginning of it.

THE Sixth Book, which is oppoſed to the *Mahumetans*, inſtead of a Preface, deduces the Judgments of GOD againſt Chriſtians, unto the very beginning and riſe of *Mahumetaniſm*: ſhewing, that is, how that ſincere and ſimple piety (which flouriſhed among Chriſtians, even when they were moſt grievouſly vexed and oppreſſed) began by little and little to wax cold; from the time that by the favour of *Conſtantine*, and the following Emperors, that profeſſion was become not only ſafe, but alſo honourable: the World being, as it were, thruſt into the Church. For

For *first* of all, Chriſtian Princes would needs continue fighting, and make no end of their Wars: even then, when they might have enjoyed peace and quietneſs.

Among the Biſhops alſo, there were moſt ſharp Contentions about the chiefeſt Sees. And as at the beginning the greateſt miſchiefs inſued, upon the preferring of the Tree of *knowledge*, before the Tree of *Life*; even ſo then alſo was curious Learning more regarded than a godly Life, and Religion turned into an Art. The conſequent of which was, that, after the example of thoſe, who built the Tower of *Babel*, a raſh affectation of things out of their reach, bred jarring and confuſion in their Language; together with diſcord one with another. Which the common People obſerving, and not knowing oft-times which way to turn themſelves, they threw the blame upon the holy Scriptures; and began to avoid them, as hurtful and dangerous.

Religion alſo began every where to be placed not in purity of mind, but, as if *Judaiſm* was brought back into the World, in Rites and Ceremonies: and in ſuch things as contain rather an exerciſe of the body, than any amendment of the mind: and in an eager zeal for that Party and ſide, which they had once choſen. Till at length it came to paſs: that there were every where many Chriſtians in Name: but very few in Deed.

GOD did not wink at theſe Vices of his People, but, out of the innermoſt parts of *Scythia* and *Germany*, poured forth, like a Deluge, immenſe ſwarms of Barbarous People into the Chriſtian World. And when the vaſt ſlaughters, which they made, proved not ſufficient to correct

rect and amend the lives of those that survived; *Mahomet*, by God's just permission, sowed a new Religion in *Arabia*: and that directly opposite to the Christian Religion; but which in words expressed, in a manner, the life of the greatest part of Christians.

This Religion was first entertained by the *Saracens*; who had revolted from *Heraclius* the Emperour: and by their Arms subdued, in a short space, *Arabia*, *Syria*, *Palestine*, *Egypt*, *Persia*; and afterward possessed themselves of *Africa*, and, beyond the Sea, of *Spain* also. But the power of the *Saracens* was abated, as by others, so chiefly by the *Turks*; a Nation also very Warlike: which, after long combates with the *Saracens*, being invited to Peace, easily embraced a Religion suited to their manners; and transferred the Majesty of the Empire to themselves. The Cities of *Asia* and *Greece* were taken, and, by the growing success of their Arms, they came into *Hungary*, and the Borders of *Germany*.

SECT. II.

The overthrow of the foundation of Mahumetanism, in denying inquiry into Religion.

THIS *Religion* altogether contrived for the shedding of blood, delights much in Rites and Ceremonies, and would be believed without all liberty of *enquiry* thereinto; whence the Vulgar

Vulgar are prohibited to read their Books, that are accounted *holy*. Which thing is a manifeſt argument of the *iniquity* thereof; For juſtly may that *Merchandiſe* be ſuſpected, which is obtruded upon this condition, that it be not lookt into.

It is true indeed, there is not in all Men a like *capacity* or knowledge, and quick *inſight* into all things; many being led into error by *pride*; others by inordinate paſſion or affection; and ſome by cuſtom. But the *divine goodneſs* forbids us to think, that thoſe Men cannot know and find the way to *eternal ſalvation*, who ſeek it, not for any by-reſpect of *profit* or *honour*, but with ſubmiſſion of themſelves, and all they have unto *God*, imploring his aſſiſtance for the obtaining of the ſame. And ſince that *God* hath implanted in the *mind* of Man the power and faculty of judging, there is no part of *truth* that better deſerves the imployment thereof, than *that* of which we cannot be ignorant, without the danger of loſing *eternal ſalvation*.

SECT. III.

A Proof againſt the Mahumetans, taken out of the Books of the Hebrews and Chriſtians, which are not corrupted.

IT is granted by *Mahomet* and his followers, that *Moſes* was ſent of *God*; and *Jeſus* alſo: and that they were holy Men, which firſt of all publiſhed the *doctrine* of *Jeſus*. But in the *Alcoran*, which is *Mahomet*'s law, many things are recorded

recorded plain contrary to what is delivered by *Moſes*, and by the Diſciples of *Jeſus*. Thus to give one example for many, all the *Apoſtles* and Diſciples of *Chriſt*, with one conſent do *teſtifie*, that *Jeſus* was *crucified*; that the third day he was reſtored to *life* again, and after that was *ſeen* of many. But *Mahomet* teacheth quite contrary: namely, that *Jeſus* was privily conveyed into *Heaven*: and not himſelf, but ſomething in his *likeneſs* was nailed to the *Croſs*; and conſequently, he did not die; but the ſight of the *Jews* was deluded and deceived.

This Objection cannot be put off, unleſs *Mahomet* ſay, (as he doth) that the Books of *Moſes*, and of *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, have not remained as they were at firſt; but have been *corrupted*. But we have confuted this *fiction* before, in the third Book.

Without doubt, if any Man ſhould ſay, that the *Alcoran* is corrupted, the *Mahumetans* would deny it, and ſay, that were an anſwer ſufficient to thoſe that could not prove the contrary: But they cannot moreover, for the integrity of their Book, alledge ſuch *arguments*, as we do produce, concerning the ſeveral Copies, that were in a ſhort ſpace diſperſed throughout the World; and that, not as the *Alcoran*, in one Language; which *Copies* were preſerved by the fidelity of ſo many *Sects*, that varied much about other matters.

The *Mahumetans* are perſwaded, that in the fourteenth Chapter of St. *John*, where mention is made of ſending the *Comforter*, there hath been ſomething regiſtred concerning *Mahomet*, which the *Chriſtians* have razed out. But here let me ask of them, whether they think this *deprava-*

pravation of *Scripture* was committed since the time of *Mahomet*, or before.

That it hapned not after the coming of *Mahomet*, is plain, because ever since that time there have been in the World very many *Copies*, not only in the *Greek* Language, but in in the *Syriac*, *Arabick*, and in parts far distant from *Arabia*, the *Ethiopick* and *Latin* Tongues of divers *translations*: all which do so agree in that place, as there cannot be shewn any diversity at all. And before the time of *Mahomet*, there was no cause of alteration: For no Man could know before his coming what *Mahomet* would teach. Yea, if the *doctrine* of *Mahomet* had contained nothing contrary to the doctrine of *Jesus*, the *Christians* would have made no more difficulty to receive his *Books*, than they did to receive the *Books* of *Moses* and the *Hebrew Prophets*. Or suppose there had been nothing written either of the *doctrine* of *Jesus* or of *Mahomet*: It is but equity that *that* be received for the *doctrine* of *Jesus*, which all *Christians* generally *agree upon*; and *that* for the *doctrine* of *Mahomet*, which all *Mahumetans* do allow of.

SECT. IV.

By comparing Mahomet with Christ in their Persons.

IN the next place, let us compare the *adjuncts* and *qualities* of both their *Doctrines*, to the end we may see whether of the two is to be preferred before the other: And first, let us consider the

the *authors*. As for *Jesus*, *Mahomet* himself confesseth, that he was the *Messias*, which was promised in the *Law* and in the *Prophets*; whom the same *Mahomet* calls the *word*, the *mind* and the *wisdom* of *God*; saying also, that he had no *Father* of Mankind. But *Mahomet* (as his own Followers believe) was generated and begot according to the ordinary course of nature. The life of *Jesus* was altogether *unblameable*, there being no crime that could be objected against him: But *Mahomet* a long time was a *Robber*, and always *effeminate*: *Jesus* ascended into *Heaven*, as *Mahomet* confesseth; but *Mahomet* lies yet intombed in his *Sepulcher*. Who then sees not whether of them is to be followed?

SECT. V.

And in their Deeds.

NEXT the *dignity* of their Persons, consider we *their acts*. *Jesus* gave sight to the blind, *health* to them that were sick, and made the *lame* to walk; yea, by *Mahomet*'s own confession, he raised some from the dead. But *Mahomet* saith of himself, that he was sent, not with *miracles*, but with Arms. Howbeit some of his Followers ascribe to him *miracles* also: But what kind, I pray? Only such as may either be done by *humane art*; as that of a *Dove*, which came flying to his *ear*: or such as had no *witnesses*, as that of a *Camel*, which is said to have had some *conference* with him by night: or lastly, such as are confuted by their own absurdity; as that a great

great part of the *Moon* fell into his *lap*, or into his ſleeve; which he, to reſtore roundneſs to that Star, ſent back again to it. Now, who will not ſay, that in a *doubtful caſe*, we ought to adhere to that Law, which hath the ſurer and more certa in Teſtimonies of Divine approbation?

SECT. VI.

Alſo ſuch as firſt embraced both Religions.

NEXT, let us ſee who, and what manner of Perſons they were, that firſt received theſe ſeveral *laws*. They that firſt embraced the *law* of *Jeſus*, were ſuch as feared *God*, Men of a plain and innocent life: Now it ſtands not with the *goodneſs* of *God* to ſuffer ſuch men to be gull'd and cheated, either by bewitching ſpeeches, or by an appearance of Miracles. But they that firſt received *Mahumetaniſm* were Thieves and Robbers; Men eſtranged from all *humanity* and *piety*.

SECT. VII.

The manner how both their Laws were propagated.

IN the next place follows, the *manner* how both theſe *Religions* were *propagated* and ſpread abroad. As for *Chriſtianity*, we have ſhewn more than once that it was enlarged and amplified by the *miracles*, not only of *Chriſt*, but alſo of

of his *Disciples*, and those that *succeeded* them: as likewise by the very *patient enduring* of the torments and punishments that *Christians* suffered. But the *Doctors* of *Mahumetanism* wrought no *miracles* at all: neither did they suffer any grievous persecutions, or cruel kinds of *death* for their *profession*: But it is a Religion which follows, where Arms go before: of which it is an accessary, and nothing of it self. Nor do they themselves bring any better *argument* for the *truth* thereof, than their *good success* in their Wars, and the *largeness* of their Empire; than which nothing in this point is more *deceitful* and uncertain.

They condemn the *worship* and services of the *Pagans*: and yet we know what great victories were won by the *Persians*, *Macedonians* and *Romans*; and how ample their Dominions were. Neither have the *Mahumetans* themselves had always *good success* with their Armies. The slaughters and great overthrows that they have received in many places, both by *Sea* and by *Land* are not unknown. They are now *banished* quite out of all *Spain*.

There is nothing that is liable to such uncertain *alterations*, nothing that may be *common* both to good and bad; which can be a certain *note* of *true Religion*: much less can their Arms, which are so *unjust*, that oftentimes they fall upon *people*, that do not any way molest or offend them, nor are known to them by any injury; in so much that all the *pretence* they have for their Arms, is only Religion; which is most irreligious.

For there is no *true worship* of *God*, but what proceeds from a *willing mind*. And the will is

to be wrought upon by *good inſtruction* and gentle *perſwaſion*, but not by *threats* or violence. He that is *compelled* to believe, doth not believe at all, but plays the *hypocrite*, and feigns himſelf to *believe*, that he may eſcape and avoid ſome danger or puniſhment. And he that by threats or ſenſe of *puniſhment*, will force another Man's aſſent, ſhews by that very proceeding, that he diſtruſts his *arguments*. Again, they themſelves deſtroy this very *pretence* of *Religion*; in that they ſuffer any people that live under their Dominion, to uſe what *Religion* they pleaſe: yea, and ſometimes they will openly *acknowledge*, that *Chriſtians* may be ſaved by their own *Law*.

SECT. VIII.

The Precepts of both Religions compared.

FUrthermore, let us compare the ſeveral *commandments* of both *Religions*: the one whereof commandeth *patience*, yea, and *love* even to them that *hate* us: But the other, revenge. In the one the bond of *matrimony* is kept firm and inviolable between the married parties, by a *mutual bearing* with one anothers humors: But in the other there is licence granted to depart and be *divorced*. Here the Husband performs himſelf what he requires of his *Wife*, and by his own example *teacheth her* to faſten her affection upon *him alone*: But there they may have *Wives* after *Wives*, there being ſtill new incentives and freſh provocations to luſt. Here, *Religion* is planted *within*, and rooted in the very heart and

Soul,

Soul, that it being well cultivated, may bring forth *fruit* profitable for *Mankind*: but there *Religion* ſpends almoſt its whole force in *Circumciſion*, and in ſome other things, that of themſelves are neither *good* nor *bad*. Finally here, in *Chriſtianity*, a moderate uſe of Meats and Wine is allowed of: but there in *Mahumetaniſm* Men are forbidden to eat *Swines fleſh*, and to drink *Wine*: which notwithſtanding is a great gift of *God*, beneficial both for body and mind, if it be ſoberly taken.

And truly, it is no wonder, if ſome *childiſh rudiments* were taught before the moſt perfect *law*, as that of *Chriſt* is: but after the *promulgation* thereof, to return again to *types* and *figures* were prepoſterous. Neither can any juſt reaſon be given why, after *Chriſtian Religion*, which is far the beſt, it ſhould be fit that any other ſhould be brought forth.

SECT. IX.

Anſwer to the Mahumetans Objection, concerning the Son of God.

THE *Mahumetans* tell us, they are not a little diſpleaſed with us, for ſaying, that *God* hath a *Son*, ſeeing he uſeth not a *Wife*: As though the word *Son* could not have a more divine *ſignification* in *God*. But *Mahomet* himſelf attributes many things as *diſhonourable* and ill-beſeeming *God*, as if he ſhould be ſaid to have a *Wife*.

Thus he ſaith, that *God* had a *cold hand*, which himſelf *knew* by experience: that *God* was carried in a *chair*, and the like.

Howbeit, when we ſay, that *Jeſus* is the Son of *God*, we do but ſignifie the ſame thing that he means, when he calls him the *word* of *God*: For the *word* is after a ſort begotten of the *mind*. Add further, that he was born of a *Virgin*, only by the *operation* of *God*, ſupplying the *vertue* or efficacy of a *Father*: that by the *power* of *God*, he was carried up into *Heaven*; all which being confeſſed even by *Mahomet* himſelf, do ſhew that *Jeſus* by a ſingular prerogative and peculiar right, may and ought to be called the *Son* of *God*.

SECT. X.

Many abſurd things in the Books of Mahumetans.

BUT on the other ſide, it would be *long* to relate how many things there are, contrary to the truth of *hiſtory*; and many things very *ridiculous* in the *writings* of the *Mahumetans*. Such is that *fable* of a fair and beautiful *Woman*, that learned a ſolemn *charm* or Song of ſome Angels that were drunk, whereby ſhe was wont to aſcend into the Sky, and likewiſe deſcend again; and aſcending once a great height into Heaven, ſhe was caught of *God*, and there fixed, and made that Star which is called *Venus*.

Like to this, is that of a *mouſe* in *Noah*'s Ark, that was bred of an *Elephant*'s Dung: and a *Cat* of the breath of a *Lion*.

More

More ſpecially, that moſt *notorious fiction*, concerning *Death* to be changed into a *Ram*, that muſt remain in the middle ſpace between *Heaven* and *Hell*: And the Fable of ſweating out their good chear in the other life: When likewiſe (they imagine) there ſhall be whole *troops* of *Women* aſſigned to every *Man* for pleaſure of *carnal copulation*. All which are ſo very egregious abſurdities, that whoſoever believes them, deſerves to be *ſtupified* and given over to a *reprobate ſenſe* for his iniquity; ſpecially ſuch a one as lives where the *light* of the *Goſpel* ſhineth.

SECT. XI.

A Concluſion directed unto Chriſtians, admoniſhing them of their duty, upon the occaſion of what hath formerly been handled.

AND thus having ended this laſt *diſputation* againſt the *Mahumetans*, there follows a concluſion of the whole, not to aliens or ſtrangers, but to all ſorts of *Chriſtians*, of what Name, Nation, or Quality ſoever they be: Shewing briefly the *uſe* or *application* of what hath hitherto been delivered; to the end thoſe things may be followed and ſought after, which are *good*; and on the contrary, the *evil* eſchewed.

Firſt of all, that they lift up *pure hands* and *hearts* unto that *God*, who of nothing made all *viſible* and *inviſible* things; having ſure confidence in him, that his *providence* and *care* watcheth over us; ſeeing that without his *permiſſion*,

not ſo much as a *Sparrow* falls to the ground. And let them not *fear* thoſe which can only kill the *body*, but rather let them *fear* him that hath like *power* both over *ſoul* and *body*. And let them not only truſt in *God* the *Father*, but alſo in *Jeſus Chriſt* his *Son*, ſince there is no other *name* upon Earth, by which we can be ſaved: And this they may rightly do, if they be verily perſwaded that *eternal life* is prepared, not for ſuch as in *word* only call *God* their *Father*, and *Jeſus* their *Lord*, but for ſuch as frame their life according to the *will* of *Jeſus*, and their *Father* which is in *Heaven*.

Furthermore, *Chriſtians* are admoniſhed faithfully, and with due care to preſerve the *doctrine* of *Chriſt*, as a moſt *precious treaſure*: And for this cauſe, let them often *read* and *meditate* the Books of the *Holy Scripture*, whereby no Man can be *deceived*, unleſs firſt he *deceive* himſelf. For the Authors and Pen-men of thoſe Writings were more *juſt* and full of Divine Inſpiration, than that they would deprive us of neceſſary *truths*, or cover and *conceal* the ſame with any clouds.

Howbeit, for the right *underſtanding* hereof, we muſt bring a mind diſpoſed and prepared to obedience: which if we do, then nothing ſhall be hid from us, which ought to be *believed*, *hoped* for, or done by us: And by this means, that *holy Spirit* will be cheriſhed and excited in us, which is given us for a *pledge* and earneſt of our future happineſs.

Moreover, I deterr *Chriſtians* from imitating the Pagans: firſt, in their worſhip of falſe *Gods*, which are nothing but vain *names*, which evil Dæmons uſe to alienate our minds and affections from

from the *worship* of the *true God*. Wherefore we cannot possibly participate with them in their *services*, and expect to receive benefit by the *Sacrifice* of *Christ*. Secondly, neither may the *Christians* imitate the Heathen in their licentious and dissolute manner of *life*; having no other Law, than what is suggested by *lust*, and prompted by sensual desire: from which Christians ought to be far removed; who should not only far excel the vitious and prophane *Pagans*, but likewise the *Lawyers* and *Pharisees* among the *Jews*; whose righteousness consisting only in some outward *performances*, could never bring them to the heavenly *Kingdom*.

Circumcision that is made with hands, is now nothing worth, but it is the inward *Circumcision* of the heart, the keeping of *Gods commandments*, the *new* creature, *faith* that is perfected in love, which make Men known to be *true Israelites* and *mystical Jews*, that is, praisers of *God*, and *commendable* in his sight. The distinction of *meats*, the *Sabbaths* and *feast-days* were but types and shadows of things, which exist in *Christ* and in *Christians*.

In like manner, by occasion of *Mahumetism*, these Admonitions are given, that our Lord *Jesus* foretold, that after his time there should arise *false Christs* and false *Prophets*, which should *lye*, and say they were sent of God. But suppose that an *Angel* should come from *Heaven*, yet we may not receive or entertain any other *doctrine* than that which *Christ* hath left us, *confirmed* by so many *testimonies*. For *God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake unto the godly that lived in times past, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, the Lord of all things, the

brightneſs of his *Fathers glory*, and the expreſs *Image* of his ſubſtance, by whom all things are *treated* that ever were or ſhall be; who upholdeth and governeth all things by his *power*, and having *purged* our ſins, is now ſet at the right hand of *God*, and hath obtained a dignity above Angels: and therefore nothing can be expected more magnificent than this *Law-giver*.

Upon the ſame occaſion *Chriſtians* are remembred, that the *weapons* of *Chriſt* and of their *Chriſtian warfare*, are not ſuch as *Mahomet* uſed, but *ſpiritual*, able to caſt down *ſtrong holds*, and every thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the *knowledge* of *God*. For our *buckler*, we have the ſhield of *faith*, whereby we may repel the fiery darts of the *Devil*: For a *breſt-plate* we have *righteouſneſs*, or integrity of life: The *hope* of eternal ſalvation is a helmet, which may cover the *weakeſt part*: And for a Sword, we have Words delivered from God, which pierce into the moſt *inward* parts of the *Soul*.

After this, follows the *exhortation* to mutual *concord*, which *Chriſt* at his departure ſo *ſolemnly*, and with ſuch *earneſtneſs* commended unto his *Diſciples*. There ought not to be *many Maſters* and *Doctors* amongſt us, but we muſt have one *Maſter*, even *Jeſus Chriſt*. All *Chriſtians* are baptized unto one *name*, wherefore there ought to be no *Sects* or *Diviſions* among them: for the cure and remedy of which *evils*, thoſe Apoſtolical ſayings are ſuggeſted; as, *let no man think more highly of himſelf than he ought to think*; but let Men be wiſe with *ſobriety*, according as *God* hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of *faith*. If any do not ſo well conceive and rightly *underſtand* all things as they ought, then

their

their *weakneſs* muſt be born with: that ſo without any brawlings or fallings out, they may be ſweetly united and knit together with us. If any do excel the reſt in *underſtanding*, it is but meet alſo that they ſurpaſs them in love, in holy *affection* and *endeavours* to do them good. And as for thoſe that in ſome points are of *different opinion* from ſuch as hold the *truth*; *God*'s leiſure muſt be waited for, until it pleaſe him to reveal the ſame *truth*, that yet lies hid from them: and in the mean while thoſe things which are agreed upon, muſt be ſtedfaſtly kept and duly practiſed.

We know now in part only, but the time ſhall come, when all things ſhall be known moſt plainly, and after a perſpicuous manner. This alſo I beg of every one, that they do not *unprofitably* detain the *talent* committed to them upon truſt; but that they *endeavour* by all means poſſible to *win* others unto *Chriſt*. For which purpoſe, we muſt not only uſe good exhortations, and wholſome *ſpeeches*, but alſo the *example* of good life; that ſo the *goodneſs* of our *Maſter* may appear by his *ſervants*, and the purity of the *law* by our *laudable actions*.

Laſtly, my Diſcourſe returning thither, where it began, I intreat ſuch Readers, as are my Country-men, that if hereby they reap any *good*, they would give *thanks* to *God* for it: And if any thing be leſs pleaſing to them, they would have a regard both to the *common infirmity* of *man*'s nature, that is prone to *errour*; and to the *time* and *place* wherein this work was rather haſtily brought forth, than elaborately compoſed.

THE

THE SEVENTH BOOK OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion: Against the present ROMAN CHURCH.

The SEVENTH Book OF THE TRUTH OF Chriſtian Religion.

SECT. I.

An Introduction, ſhewing what makes the Addition of another Book neceſſary.

IF thoſe Apoſtolical Exhortations, which conclude the laſt Book, had been carefully followed; there would have been no need of ſaying any more, for the confirmation of Mens minds in the belief of the Truth and Certainty of the Chriſtian Religion. But the unhappy differences which are among Chriſtians, and which are maintained with unſpeakable animoſities and hatreds (nay with anathema's alſo, which one part pronounces againſt the reſt) have made many Men doubtful which of theſe hold the true Chriſtian Faith, for which the Apoſtle exhorts us

us moſt earneſtly to contend; and in this doubtfulneſs, there are ſome who embrace none at all.

For we ſee the Eaſtern Church disjoynted from the Weſtern: and the Weſtern divided into *three* great parts, every one of which condemn the other two: and all of them are ſubdivided into ſeveral little parties by variety of opinions; for which they contend with the ſame zeal, that they do for the Faith of Chriſt. Which is thereby diſgraced; and reputed by ſome to be of no greater certainty, than thoſe dubious opinions.

SECT. II.

Diviſions among Chriſtians, no ſuch objection againſt Chriſtianity, as is imagined.

BUT to a conſidering Man, this will be no occaſion of ſcandal: but rather confirm him more in the true Chriſtian Faith; which every one of us ought to preſerve with the greateſt care, as a moſt ineſtimable Treaſure. For, as this is common to every Religion, to have many diſputes about it, and different opinions in it; and as Chriſt and his Apoſtles foretold there would many *falſe Chriſts* and *falſe Apoſtles*, and *falſe Prophets* ariſe (as was ſaid before in the end of the foregoing Book) who would lye, and ſay they were ſent, when they were not, introducing falſe doctrines, and calling them by the Name of his Religion; and as they give us a good reaſon alſo why it ſhould be ſo; that Mens probity and ſincerity might be tried, and brought hereby to the touchſtone, and that their diligence

gence and care in preſerving themſelves might be exerciſed: So, bleſſed be our Lord, the true Chriſtian Religion is ſtill retained, and kept intire every where, by all theſe diſagreeing Parties; notwithſtanding the fierce quarrels they have one with another. As appears by this (which is a ſhort, eaſie, and certain way to our ſatisfaction in this matter) that the Faith into which they are all baptized, is one and the ſame without any variation. That is, they all enter into the Church at the very ſame gate; and upon the ſame terms and conditions, neither more nor leſs, are made members of Chriſt, and have a title given them, if they live according to this Faith, unto Eternal Salvation.

SECT. III.

As appears even in the Roman Church, which hath given the greateſt ſcandal.

THE Church of *Rome* it ſelf, which now makes the greateſt differences in the Chriſtian World, requires nothing more at this day to be believed by thoſe, that are by Baptiſm received into the Church of Chriſt; but only thoſe things which are contained in the *Creed*, commonly called the Apoſtles. This *Creed* is recited there by the Prieſt, and this alone, when he comes to the Font; and he interrogates the Perſons to be baptized (if they be adult) or their undertakers (if they be Infants) about no other belief. Upon the profeſſion of which, he bids them enter into the holy Church of God, that they

they may receive the Celeſtial bleſſing from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and have a part with Him and with his Saints: And having again examined adult Perſons, asking them, *Do you believe in God the Father Almighty*, &c. and mentioning no other Articles of Faith, he baptizes them; and declares them to be regenerate, and to have remiſſion of all ſins. And ſo do we do here; nor is there any different practice in any other part of the Chriſtian World; but every where it is ſufficient to conſent to this Creed: which is nothing but a brief explication, what we are to believe concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, in whoſe Name we are baptized.

If there were any thing beyond this, which we are neceſſarily bound to believe, it ſhould have been then propounded when we were admitted into the ſtate of Chriſtianity. For Baptiſm gives us a right and title to Salvation (if we do not forfeit it afterward by Apoſtaſie, or by a wicked life) and this Faith (with a promiſe to live according to it) gives us a right to Baptiſm.

Herein indeed the *Roman* Church contradicts it ſelf, in decreeing many other Articles of belief, without which it declares Men cannot be ſaved; and yet receiving Men at Baptiſm into a ſtate of Salvation, without demanding their conſent to any ſuch Articles. But ſo they do in many other things, and cannot avoid it: while they forſake the ancient Univerſal Rule, and ſet up their own private Authority, to impoſe what they pleaſe, under pain of Damnation.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

But both contradicts it ſelf, and departs from the Ancient and truly Catholick Church.

FOR that no ſuch things, as they would now oblige all Chriſtians to believe, were anciently exacted, it appears moſt manifeſtly by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* (to name no others) in ſeveral places. Who call the *Creed* now mentioned, *the Rule of Truth, and the Rule of Faith*: which the Church throughout all the World, ſaith *Irenæus* (*though it be diſperſed to the moſt extream parts of the Earth*) *received from the Apoſtles and their Diſciples: and believes, as if there were but one Soul and one Heart, in ſo many Men: and with a perfect conſent preaches and teaches, and delivers theſe things, as having but one mouth. For though there be divers Languages in the World, yet one and the ſame Tradition prevails every where: For neither the Churches in* Germany *believe otherways, or deliver any thing elſe; nor they in* Spain, *nor they in* France; *nor they in the* Eaſt; *nor they in* Egypt; *nor they in* Libya; *nor they that are founded in the midſt of the World. But as the Sun is one and the ſame in the whole World: So is the preaching of the Truth, inlightning all Men, who will come to the knowledge of it. And neither he who is moſt eloquent among the Governours of the Church, preaches any thing different, (for no man is above his Maſter) nor doth he that is weakeſt in ſpeech leſſen in the leaſt this Tradition. For there being one and the ſame Faith, he that hath moſt to ſay cannot inlarge it; nor he that hath leaſt, diminiſh it.*

Thus they declared their minds in those early days: when there was no Catholick Man or Woman in the World, required to believe any of those Doctrines, now in controversie between us and the *Roman* Church: (and set down in the *Creed* of Pope *Pius* IV. as necessary to Salvation) but they all contented themselves with the simple belief of those things which the Apostles have delivered in their Creed; the greatest Men in the Church delivering no more, nor the meanest saying less. And with this wise and good Men satisfied themselves in times succeeding, as appears by this remarkable passage of St. *Hilary* in his little Book, which he himself delivered to the Emperor *Constantius*. Where he thus complains, *Faith is now inquired after; as if we had none. Faith must be set down in writing; as if it were not in the heart. Being regenerated by Faith, we are now taught what to believe; as if that regeneration could have been without Faith.* WE LEARN CHRIST AFTER BAPTISM; AS IF THERE COULD HAVE BEEN ANY BAPTISM, WITHOUT FAITH IN CHRIST.

SECT. V.

Christianity therefore is not there in its purity; but much corrupted.

WHICH is a sufficient Argument to prove that the Christian Religion is not sincerely preserved in that Church: and ought to with-hold us from joyning with them, in imposing thus upon the Christian World; and thereby

thereby breaking the bond of Unity; and turning Men away from the Faith, by the palpable falsities and absurd mixtures, which are brought into it; and that as necessary parts of the Faith of Christ. To the adulterating of which we ought by no means to consent; but maintain it in that purity, wherein the Apostles delivered it to their Successors: as we find it set down in the Works of a great many following Doctors of the Church; whose Names I forbear, but are ready at hand to make good what I quoted just now out of *Irenæus*. Who acknowledges him for a sincere Christian, *who holds fast* τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας (as *Epiphanius* recites his words, which were then extant in *Greek*) *that Rule of Faith, which he received in Baptism, firm and unmoveable.* He cannot be a *Heretick* who thus believes on the Son of *God*, in the sense wherein the *Nicene* Creed (not adding any new Article of Faith, but only declaring what was believed from the beginning) hath explained the Word: But they are *Schismaticks* who call him so; and will not admit him into their Communion, unless he consent to other things, and hold them to be equally certain, and necessary, with the Ancient Rule of Faith.

SECT. VI.

Answer to an Evasion from the force of the foregoing Argument.

TO pretend that all those Articles of Faith, which they now impose, though not expressly mentioned in the Creed, yet are contained in one Article of it, viz. *in the belief of the holy Catholick Church*; is, in effect, to make all the rest of the Creed unnecessary, and to establish this sole Rule of Faith in the room of it. For if by believing the Catholick Church, we are to understand, as they would have us, whatsoever the Catholick Church propounds: then it had been enough to have said to those *Catechumens* that came for Baptism, *Do you believe in the Holy Catholick Church?* and to add any more had been utterly superfluous.

But the vanity of this further appears, in that none of the ancient Doctors who have expounded the Creed (and there are many of them) have given any such sense of that Article of the *Catholick Church*: Nay, it was not in the most ancient forms of Faith: nor doth the Church truly Catholick teach any thing as necessary to be believed to Salvation, but what is contained in the Creed. For we do, in their own sence, believe the *Catholick Church*; but not the *Roman Catholick Church* (which their Creed will have to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches:) because, to omit many other absurdities which are in it, there was a *Catholick* Church before there was a *Roman*: and to say, that they believe

believe the Catholick Church, meaning thereby the *Roman*, is nothing more than to say, they believe themselves.

SECT. VII.

Their absurd Explication of the Unity of the Catholick Church.

NOTHING therefore can be further from the Truth, than that Explication of *the Unity of the Catholick Church*; which is delivered in the *Roman Catechism*, published by the Authority of the same Pope *Pius* IV. in pursuance of the Council of *Trent*. Wherein the *Catechumen* is taught to believe and profess, that the Catholick Church is one, not only because of one Faith (and other reasons mentioned by the Apostle, *Ephes.* iv.) and because it is subject to one invisible Governour, which is Christ: But, *because it is subject also to one visible Governor, who holds the Roman Chair, the legitimate Successor of St.* Peter. *Concerning whom it is the unanimous opinion of all the Fathers, that this visible Head is necessary to constitute, and conserve the Unity of the Church. And to this Head or Pastor, Christ hath given the authority of ruling and governing the whole Church, as the Vicar and Minister of his Power.*

Thus that *Catechism* teaches, in the First Part, the IX. Article, *n.* 11, 12, 13. Which (besides that it is confuted by the plain demonstration now mentioned; that Christ had a Catholick Church, which had Unity in it self, when there

was no *Roman* Church) is directly contrary to the constant Doctrine, not only of the Scripture; but of all the Fathers; (whose consent they falsly boast of) and of many Popes of *Rome*; and of Councils also, both General, and particular; even of the Councils of *Lateran* and *Trent*; which by approving the *Five First* General Councils, who condemn this Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, do in effect condemn it themselves.

SECT. VIII.

Which forbids us to joyn in Communion with them upon such Terms.

TO that Church then we ought to adhere, which hath kept the Rule of Faith, once delivered to the Saints, simple and unmixed with humane inventions. Which if we admit, as necessary to Salvation; we betray the truth of Christ, and are false and unjust to innumerable Christian Brethren: who by Baptism are admitted into a state of Salvation, but hereby unmercifully cut off from the Body of Christ; though they have that Faith, which makes them true Members of it.

This is the Great Crime of the *Roman* Church; and may suffice, instead of all other demonstrations, to prove that they have corrupted themselves, and departed from the simplicity that is in Christ. For this very Article alone (which is a part of their Faith) that there is no Salvation, but by union with the *Roman* Catholick Church, and

and that by subjection to it; thrusts out of Heaven, not only the ancient Christian pious Emperors, who refused such subjection: But many of their ancient Popes, who acknowledged their subjection was due to the Christian Emperors; together with the ancient Patriarchs and Fathers, assembled in many Councils; and the most famous Christian Churches; the most glorious Martyrs and Saints of Christ, that the best times of Christianity have known; and, to say nothing of after Ages, the present Christians of *Greece*, *Russia*, *Armenia*, *Syria*, *Ethiopia*; who by this Article of subjection to the *Catholick Roman Church*, are all excluded from Christian communion, and must perish everlastingly.

For *Bellonius* says, that in his travels he met with *Nine* sorts of Christians at *Jerusalem*; Eight of which Nine know nothing of this Universal Bishop, or do not regard him: and of the Ninth, there is scarce half that acknowledges his Authority.

And yet there are Men among them, of no mean note and number, who have the confidence to tell us, that by the *Catholick Church*, which we are bound to believe, is to be understood the Bishop of *Rome*: whose Declarations, when he will determine any thing to be of Faith, we all ought to receive. And though we are assured, as much as we are that there was such a Person as St. *Peter*, that Christ never gave him (much less his Successors) any Authority at all over his whole Church: Yet now, to deny the Pope's Supremacy is such a Heresie, that let a Man be never so Orthodox in all other points of the Catholick Faith, this alone is sufficient to make him be excommunicated and cut off from the Body of Christ.

Witneſs our King *Henry* VIII. who was excommunicated, and his Kingdom given away for no other fault, by a Bull of *Paul* the *Third*: who affirms in the beginning of that Bull, that herein he acted by Divine authority; *which* (according as God ſaith in the Prophet *Jeremiah*) *had ſet him over Nations and Kingdoms, to root up and deſtroy, as well as to build and plant; having the ſupreme power over all Kings and People, throughout the whole Earth.* Which certainly is ſuch new Language, never known in the Church for many Ages; that they who are not convinced thereby of the corruption of Chriſtian Religion in the *Roman* Church, have their Eyes blinded with the Worldly Splendor of it.

SECT. IX.

But on the other ſide, not to ſlight Epiſcopal Authority.

YET on the other hand, it muſt be acknowledged, that this enormous power which they have uſurped, is a very ſtrong proof of the high Authority of Chriſtian Biſhops in the Church; and of the great reverence that was paid to them by Chriſtian People. Who otherways would never have thus ſubmitted to their will and pleaſure; had not the obedience which they had been wont always to yield to their authority, diſpoſed them to be brought by little and little under an abſolute ſubjection.

Nor would there have been reaſon for thoſe Cautions, which St. *Peter* gives to the Governors of

of God's Church (not at *Rome*, but elsewhere, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2, 3.) *not to Lord it over them*: if they had not been invested with a power, which all Christians reverenced so much, that it might more easily be abused, than contemned; and sooner perswade People to follow them with a blind obedience, than to slight their judgment, and refuse to conform to their Injunctions.

And therefore whosoever they are that now despise all Ecclesiastical Authority, we may be sure they have swerved from the true Principles of Christianity: and they also are altogether inexcusable, who shake off the Episcopal Government, and refuse to be subject to it, under a pretence that there ought to be an equality among Christ's Ministers. Which as it is against the practice of the whole Church for many Ages, from the beginning: So directly opposes the Institution of Christ, who set his Apostles in a superiority to the LXX; as his Apostles set such Men as *Timothy* and *Titus* in a superiority over the Presbyteries of those Churches, which they could no longer attend themselves.

SECT. X.

Arguments enough in the foregoing Books, to prove the true Christian Religion not to be sincerely preserved in the Roman Church: one is their way of worship.

IT would be easie to shew how much the *Roman* Church hath deviated from the Rule of Faith, by considering particularly the falsity of every

every one of thoſe Doctrines which they have added to the ancient Creeds. But it will be more proper, in ſo ſhort a Treatiſe as this, only to bring to the Readers mind ſome Principles in the foregoing Books; which direct us as plainly to reject Popery, (and upon the very ſame ground) as thoſe falſe Religions, for whoſe confutation he alledges them.

And *Firſt*, let the Reader again weigh his Arguments againſt the worſhip of the *Pagans*, and he will find them, in ſeveral things, as ſtrong againſt the worſhip of the *Roman* Church: whoſe practices, it will hereby appear, are no leſs faulty than their Faith. As for example, in the worſhip of Angels, and Saints.

For the former, They ſhould not only (as he diſcourſes there, *Book* IV.) in their very worſhip make an evident difference between the moſt high God and thoſe Angels to whom they commend themſelves, (which they do not do in the *Roman* Church, but quite contrary, in the external acts of adoration have none that are appropriated to God alone, but are all common to him with others; as *adoration, invocation, burning incenſe, nay offering the Sacrifice of the Maß in their honour, and making vows to them*) but be ſatisfied alſo what order there is among the Angels; what good may be expected from each of them; and what honour the moſt high God is willing ſhould be beſtowed upon every one of them. All which being wanting, (for there is nothing revealed about ſuch matters) it is plain from thence, how uncertain that Religion is, and how much ſafer it would be for them to betake themſelves, as we do, to the worſhip of Almighty God alone. Eſpecially for that, to whomſoever

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He is favourable, to them the holy Angels muſt needs be kind and ſerviceable (though no Petitions be made to them) being the Miniſters and Servants of the moſt High: who hath revealed this to us, that He hath made them all ſubject to Jeſus Chriſt; to be ſent forth by Him, for the good of thoſe who ſhall be heirs of Salvation. In the number of which, they, above all others, have reaſon to hope to be, who have ſo great a reſpect to His Majeſty, and confidence in his Goodneſs, that for fear of offending Him, they dare worſhip none but Himſelf alone: reſting aſſured, He will deal well with them, even for this reaſon; becauſe they have ſuch a regard to Him, as not to preſume without his warrant and authority, ſo much as to recommend themſelves to Him, by any Angel in Heaven, though never ſo great; but by his only begotten Son Jeſus Chriſt alone, who is the Head of them all, and whom He hath conſecrated to be our perpetual Interceſſor with Him.

The like we may ſay of the Worſhip of Saints; to whom all Prayers are fruitleſs and vain, unleſs they be able to do ſomething for their Supplicants. Of which they have no certainty; nor is there more ground to ſay that they can, than that they cannot; but rather leſs ground: ſince it is inconceivable how they ſhould be able to hear and aſſiſt ſo many, as addreſs themſelves to the ſame Saint, in ſeveral far diſtant parts of the World: without ſuppoſing them to be equal to our bleſſed Saviour (for they have as many, if not more, Supplicants as He) by ſuch an union as He hath with the Divinity.

They worſhip alſo, which is ſtill worſe, ſuch for Saints, as never were in being; and others whoſe

whoſe Saintſhip there is too much reaſon to queſtion, being apparently guilty of ſuch crimes, as are inconſiſtent with it. For inſtance, our *Thomas à Becket* (by whoſe blood, they have prayed our Lord Chriſt, that they may aſcend into Heaven; and do ſtill pray, (upon *Decemb.* 29.) that they who implore his help *may have the ſaving effect of his Petitions*) whom our Forefathers, even in the time of Popery, lookt upon as a perjured Perſon, and as a Traitor: being not only called ſo by the King; but in Parliament accuſed of Treaſon, the Biſhops as well as others being preſent; and the Biſhop of *Wincheſter* pronouncing the ſentence againſt him.

In ſhort, the Devotions of the *Roman* Church are ſo like the ancient Idolatry; that the cunningeſt Man in the World cannot find any difference, without a great many nice and ſubtil diſtinctions: which in practice make no difference at all.

SECT. XI.

Another is the way of promoting their Religion.

THERE is this Argument alſo againſt it (as *Grotius* ſpeaks of *Paganiſm*, Book 4. Sect. 10.) taken from the Religion it ſelf; that if it be not ſupported by humane power, or policy, immediately it falls to the ground. For as the Church of *Rome* (it hath been obſerved by wiſe Men of our own) got and increaſed its abſolute Authority over Mens conſciences, by obtruding on

on the World ſuppoſititious Writings, and corrupting the Monuments of former times; by falſe Miracles, and forging falſe ſtories; by Wars alſo and Perſecutions; by Maſſacres, Treaſons and Rebellions; in ſhort, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent: ſo take away theſe ſupports, and that Religion cannot ſtand by its own ſtrength.

And truly his reaſon in the *Third* Section of the ſame Book againſt the *Paganiſh* worſhip, that it was from evil Spirits, becauſe they inſtigated their Worſhippers to deſtroy them that worſhipped one God; holds good ſtill (if there be any force in it) to prove the *Roman* Church not to be acted by the good Spirit of God; becauſe they would not let thoſe live (had they ſufficient power) who worſhip only one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and content themſelves with the Belief before mentioned, into which they were Baptized; not preſuming to ſuperadd any thing elſe, as neceſſary to Salvation.

And, which is worſe, while they have been moſt cruel to thoſe, who for fear of offending God, dare not allow the worſhip they give to Saints, which they think belongs to him alone; nor fall down before the Sacrament and adore it, as very God Himſelf: They have tolerated ſuch without any cenſure, who have raiſed St. *Francis* into an equality with, if not ſuperiority unto our bleſſed Saviour; and made the bleſſed Virgin a kind of Goddeſs; nay called the *Pope* the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords; giving him ſuch a power over all Kings and Kingdoms, as ſober Men among themſelves are aſhamed to own. Which is juſt after the example of the *Pagans*, among whom, as *Grotius* obſerves,

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it was lawful for the *Poets*, to ſing what they pleaſed, though never ſo lewd, concerning the Gods, and for the *Epicures* to take Providence out of the World: while the *Jews* were made ridiculous, and the Chriſtians moſt barbarouſly uſed, as if they had been the vileſt of Mankind. Of which more anon.

SECT. XII.

The Romaniſts themſelves overthrow their own Religion.

THAT argument alſo which he urges for Chriſtianity againſt the *Pagans*, that the chief Points of Chriſtian Doctrine, were acknowledged by ſome or other of the beſt and greateſt among them; may be uſed by us alſo for the Faith to which we now hold: there being ſeveral learned Writers in the *Roman* Church, who have acknowledged our belief to be ſufficient to Salvation; and the points which they have ſuperadded, having been lookt upon by the moſt excellent Perſons among them, only as meer Scholaſtical opinions; and not certain Truths, of which we can have a full aſſurance.

Here I might ſhew, how *the ſufficiency of the Scripture* hath been owned; and *the Apoſtles Creed* likewiſe confeſſed to contain all things that are abſolutely neceſſary to be believed to Salvation. But becauſe I would not have this Book ſwell above the bigneſs of the foregoing, I ſhall let them alone: and inſtance only in the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, which is now preſſed with

with ſo much violence upon the Chriſtian World; but moſt plainly condemned by *Gratian* in their *Canon Law*, and by the *Author*, or *Authors* of the *Canon of the Maſs* it ſelf.

About the former we may be ſatisfied out of the *Decretum*, if we look into the *Third* part, and the *ſecond* Diſtinction, concerning *Conſecration*. Where in the XLVIII. chap. out of St. *Auſtin* and *Proſper*, he ſays, *The heavenly bread, which is truly Chriſts fleſh*, ſuo modo, *after a ſort or manner is called the Body of Chriſt: whereas* revera *in truth it is the Sacrament of his Body, which was hanged upon the Croſs: and the ſacrificing of the fleſh of Chriſt, by the hand of the Prieſt, is called his death, and paſſion, and crucifixion, not in the Truth of the thing, but in a ſignifying myſtery.* Which words are ſo directly againſt the preſent ſenſe of the *Roman* Church, that no Proteſtant can ſpeak more expreſly and clearly againſt it; nor deſire a plainer confutation of it; unleſs it be that of the *Gloſs* upon thoſe words, which is this: *The celeſtial Sacrament, which truly repreſents the fleſh of Chriſt, is ſaid to be the Body of Chriſt; but improperly: whence it is ſaid to be ſo*, ſuo modo, ſed non rei veritate, *after a manner, but not in the truth of the thing. So the ſenſe is, it is called Chriſts body; that is, it is ſignified thereby.*

And if we look further into the LII. chapter, we find he ſaith Chriſt was *ſacrificed but once*, in ſemet ipſo, *in himſelf, when he hung upon the Croſs*, &c. *Yet is offered daily in* Sacramento, *in the Sacrament, which the Church frequents in memory of that thing.* Which Sacrifice in the next Chapter he calls *exemplum*, the example, or reſemblance of that upon the Croſs, offered in remem-

remembrance of his Death. Which is ſufficient to convince us that they believed in thoſe days, as we do now, and not as the *Roman* Church doth; elſe He would not have called that, which he ſays was truly the fleſh of Chriſt, the *heavenly bread*. But to put all out of doubt, let us turn to the *lxxii.* Chapter, and there we find theſe remarkable words out of St. *Auſtin*, which fully explain the buſineſs, *Becauſe it is not lawful for Chriſt to be devoured by our teeth, therefore our Lord would have this Bread and this Wine in a Myſtery, by conſecration of the Holy Spirit, to be potentially created his fleſh and blood, and to be daily myſtically offered for the life of the World.* They are *potentially* then or *virtually* made his Body and Blood, though but Bread and Wine in themſelves: *and of this Sacrifice which is thus wonderfully made in commemoration of Chriſt,* (as he adds out of St. *Hier.* ch. *lxxvi.*) *it is lawful to eat*; but *of that which Chriſt offered on the Croſs,* ſecundum ſe, *according to it ſelf none can eat.*

But *the Canon of the Maſs* will more abundantly convince us, that he or they that made it, did not believe any thing of *Tranſubſtantiation.* For *Firſt*, after the Conſecration of the Bread and Wine, the Prieſt ſigns them *ten* times, at leaſt, with the ſign of the Croſs: which can have no excuſe made for it, (but is the greateſt impudence) if it be indeed Chriſt Himſelf who lies before the Prieſt, whom he thus croſſes; For ſure he doth not intend to bleſs *Chriſt*, or to drive away the Devil from him, or any ſuch like thing, for which thoſe Croſſings are uſed in that Church.

But more than this, (2*dly*,) it is obſervable, that after Conſecration alſo, the Prieſt ſtill calls Chriſt's Body, *Panem Sanctum*, the holy Bread

of

of Eternal life; which ſhews that, when this *Rule* was made, they believed the Bread to be ſtill remaining.

A further Indication of which, is, that (*3dly*) the Prieſt proceeds to beſeech God, that He would vouchſafe to look upon that Sacrifice *of his gifts*, with a propitious and ſerene countenance; and to accept them, as He did the gift of his Servant *Abel*, and the Sacrifice of *Abraham*, and that which his High-Prieſt *Melchiſedeck* offered to Him. Which is moſt abſurdly ſpoken, if the Prieſt there offer Chriſt himſelf unto God; For then he intercedes with him for our Interceſſor, as if he needed our Prayers: and beſides, compares Him with the firſt-fruits of the Flock, and the ſpoils of War; which is ſo incongruous, and ſo much below his heavenly glory, that an unprejudiced Man cannot but think, they who compoſed that Prayer, looked upon thoſe gifts which they offered, as ſtill Bread and Wine.

Which appears more fully (*4thly*) from what follows in the next Prayer, where, bowing profoundly, and laying his hands upon the Altar, the Prieſt humbly intreats God in this manner; *Command theſe things to be carried by the hands of thy holy Angel, to thy high Altar, into the preſence of thy Divine Majeſty.* Where there are two plain teſtimonies againſt their preſent Doctrine. For *Firſt*, nothing but the Bread and Wine can be called *hæc* theſe things; which in no propriety of ſpeech can ſignifie the very natural body of Chriſt. Who (*ſecondly*) can by none of God's Angels be carried into Heaven, being there already; nor brought more than he is into the preſence of the Divine Majeſty, where He was before the Prieſt ſaid Maſs, and ſits for ever there at God's right hand.

Had they that compoſed this Prayer believed any thing of *Tranſubſtantiation*, they would have ſaid, (and could not have ſaid otherways, if they ſaid any thing of this matter) *Almighty God, behold here, before me upon thy Altar, lies thy only begotten Son Jeſus Chriſt, by my ſacrifice unto Thee: that very Chriſt who is at thy right hand, I now take into my hands to preſent unto thy Majeſty, under the Form of Bread and Wine. Him thou canſt not reject, nor me his Prieſt, who offer Him unto Thee, &c.* Or ſome ſuch like words, more befitting their preſent notions, than deſiring an Angel may carry what the Prieſt offers, and preſent it unto GOD.

But we find quite contrary, which is the *laſt* thing I ſhall obſerve, that in concluſion, the Prieſt acknowledges, that by Chriſt Jeſus God always *creates, and ſanctifies and quickens, and bleſſes* (making a croſs upon the Hoſt and the Chalice, at every one of thoſe *three* laſt words) *all theſe good things.* Which can be meant of nothing but the Bread and Wine conſecrated to the commemoration and repreſentation of Chriſt's body and blood ſacrificed for us. For Chriſt's own very natural body and blood cannot in any tolerable ſenſe, be ſaid to be continually created and quickned, or made alive: unleſs you will ſuppoſe him to have been dead before, nay not to have been at all. For *creation* implies the thing not to have been; and *vivification*, not to have been then alive, when it was quickned.

Yet this fancy, *of Chriſts real preſence in the Sacrament, by Tranſubſtantiation*, againſt which there are ſuch numerous Teſtimonies in their own Communion Service, is now become the main Article of their Religion. For we all know

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to our great grief and aſtoniſhment, that when the publick Authority of this Realm was on their ſide, ſubſcription was not urged to any Article of their Religion upon ſuch violent and bloody terms, as unto this of the *Real Preſence*. The Myſtery of which iniquity, as a great Man of our own ſaid, in the Age before us, cannot be better reſolved than into the powerful and deceitful working of Satan; who delights thus to do deſpite to our Lord, and to his Religion; by ſeducing his profeſſed Subjects into a belief of ſuch things as make them and Him ridiculous unto unbelievers; and ingage them in the worſt kind of Rebellion, he could imagine, by worſhipping Bread and Wine inſtead of their Saviour: and all this upon the leaſt occaſions and ſhalloweſt reaſons.

SECT. XIII.

Other Inſtances of it.

BUT beſides theſe plain confeſſions of that Church againſt it ſelf, there are many other things, (which I ſhall but juſt name) wherein we have the teſtimony of ſeveral of their own learned Men (ready to be produced) for our, and againſt their belief: proving clearly that the preſent, is not the old Religion of that Church; but that they have brought into it many Innovations: *by adding to the Canonical Books of Scripture*; *by making their vulgar Latin Tranſlation of the Bible* (about which they themſelves cannot agree) *authentical*; *by forbidding the People*

to read the holy Scriptures in their own Language; and by denying them the publick Prayers in a Language they underſtand; by giving the Pope, not only a new Title of Univerſal Biſhop, but an authority and juriſdiction, which was never heard of for many Ages; by increaſing the number of Sacraments, and altering their nature; by taking away the Cup from the People; and turning the Sacrament of Chriſts body and blood into a proper expiatory ſacrifice; by celebrating the Euchariſt, without any body to communicate; by ſetting up Images in Churches, and ordaining Religious Worſhip to be given to them; by invocating Saints and Angels; (as was ſaid before) *and by the Doctrine of Purgatory, and Indulgences, and many other; together with a vaſt number of ſtrange ceremonies, in the making holy water, conſecrating bells,* &c. For which no antiquity can be pretended.

The woful effect of which is this (if we may ſpeak the plain Truth) that by preſſing upon Mens belief a great deal too much, and placing great vertue in trifles, they have tempted Men to believe nothing at all. As is apparent from hence; that where and when (as an excellent Writer of our own ſpeaks) this Religion hath moſt abſolutely commanded, there and then Atheiſm or Infidelity hath moſt abounded. And how ſhould it do otherwiſe? when, as he obſerves, ſo many lying Legends have been obtruded upon Mens belief, and ſo many falſe Miracles forged to juſtifie them, as are very likely to make ſuſpicious Men queſtion the truth of all: And ſo many weak and frivolous ceremonies deviſed, and ſuch abundance of ridiculous obſervances in Religion introduced, as are no leſs apt to beget a ſecret contempt and ſcorn of it in witty Men: and

and conſequently Atheiſm and Impiety; if they have this perſwaſion ſetled in their mind (which is indeavoured to be rooted in them from their child-hood) that if they be not of that Religion, they were as good be of none at all: And when a great part alſo of the Doctrines now mentioned, ſo apparently make for the temporal ends of thoſe who teach them; that ſagacious Men can ſcarce forbear thinking, they were on purpoſe deviſed to ſerve thoſe deſigns: That particular doctrine alſo of *Tranſubſtantiation* being ſo portentous, that joyned with the forenamed perſwaſion of *No Papiſts no Chriſtians*, it hath in all probability brought more than *Averroes* to this reſolution; *ſince Chriſtians eat that which they adore, let my Soul be among the Philoſophers*: And *laſtly*, the pretence which is ſo common, that there is no ground to believe the Scriptures, but their Churches infallibility; and yet no ground to believe their Churches infallibility, but ſome Texts of Scripture; being too plain a way to lead thoſe who diſcern the labyrinth wherein they are, to believe neither Church nor Scripture.

SECT. XIV.

Whereby they have ſpoiled Chriſtianity as the Pagans did the Natural Religion.

THESE things, which have been already urged by the Writers of our Church, for the conviction of thoſe who are capable of it, I repeat here again; becauſe they ſeem to me very

powerful for the preſervation of thoſe, who are not already tainted, or too far gone in that deluſion. Which is ſo great, (that to ſum up all belonging to this Head) we may ſafely ſay, *Popery* is juſt ſuch a depravation of the true Chriſtian Religion, as *Paganiſm* was of the Natural Religion. There cannot be a righter conception of it, than this; which appears too plainly, in the abſurd doctrines and opinions, which they have mingled with the Chriſtian Faith; in their multiplied ſuperſtitions; in their fabulous relations of the Saints, wherein they have ſurpaſſed the very *Poets* themſelves; and (to paſs by the reſt) in their proſtrating themſelves before Images; and giving religious worſhip to Men departed.

Which laſt inſtance, furniſhed the Pagans of *Cochin* with this anſwer to the Jeſuits (as *Chriſ. Borrus*, one of that Order, relates) when they preſſed upon them the belief of one God, and no more. We do believe it, ſaid they; but thoſe whom you ſee us worſhip in their Images, were Men of great Sanctity; whom pious People therefore worſhip according to their merit, juſt as you give to the Apoſtles and Martyrs and Confeſſors divers degrees of honour and religious ſervice, as you know them to have excelled in virtue and piety. And that they might confirm this to be their ſenſe of the Divinity, they bid the Jeſuits obſerve one part of the Altar in their Temple to be void of Images, and to be hid in an obſcure and dark place; which they ſaid was the proper ſeat of the moſt high God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, who could not be repreſented in any form and ſhape; and that the Images which ſtood about that place were the repreſentations of their Inter-

Interceſſors with Him; who having great power with the moſt high God, did obtain many gifts and bleſſings for thoſe that invocated them. How this differs from the notions of the *Roman* Church, I do not ſee; unleſs it be in this, that they have ſometimes adventured to repreſent God himſelf in a ſhape. Otherwiſe the worſhip is the very ſame (the dead Men, who are the objects of it, only changed) and may very well juſtifie us, if we ſay, (and therein we ſpeak very moderately) *that their worſhip is an Image, at leaſt of the ancient Idolatry.* And moves them (to make the reſemblance more perfect) unto the very ſame rage and violence, which was in the Pagans, againſt all thoſe that differ from them, and cannot conſent to worſhip God in that way: proſecuting them with all manner of cruelty, as if they were utter enemies of God, and of all Religion.

By which we may certainly know that they are ſo far from being the only true Chriſtians, that they are a very degenerate part of *Chriſts* Church: wanting that great mark of his faithful Diſciples, *to love one another, even as Chriſt loved us.* To which they are ſuch ſtrangers, that quite contrary, they not only hate and perſecute, but endeavour, as I ſaid, to root out thoſe from the face of the Earth; who obediently believe all that they can find our Lord and his Apoſtles have delivered; and profeſs they are ready with all their hearts to receive and do, whatſoever any body can further teach them, to be his mind: Nay, are very deſirous and diligent to know it; ſparing no pains to underſtand the whole Truth, as it is in Chriſt Jeſus.

SECT. XV.

Anſwer to what they ſay about Miracles.

THEY pretend indeed abundance of Miracles wrought in their Church, as a ſufficient condemnation of thoſe who obſtinately refuſe to invocate Saints, to worſhip their Images and the conſecrated Hoſt, to believe Purgatory and all other things, for the proof of which theſe wonders are alledged. But herein alſo they imitate the *Pagans*, who were guilty of the like deceit: and the ſame anſwer will ſerve here, which *Grotius* gives there (*L.* iv. *Sect.* 8.) in his confutation of the old Idolatry. For *Firſt*, the wiſeſt Men among them have rejected many of theſe Miracles, as not ſupported by the teſtimony of any credible witneſſes; nay, as plain fictions. Others alſo of them, which are pretended to be of better credit, hapned in ſome private place, in the night, before one or two perſons: whoſe eyes crafty Prieſts (as he ſpeaks) might eaſily delude with falſe ſhews and counterfeit appearances of things. And further there are others which only raiſe admiration among People ignorant of the nature of things; and are no true miracles.

I deny not, but there may have things been done among them, which no humane power could effect by the ſtrength of natural cauſes; and yet no Divine, that is, omnipotent Power be needful to their production. For thoſe Spirits, which are interpoſed between God and Man, are able by their nimbleneſs, cunning, activity, and ſtrength

ſtrength to make ſuch ſtrange application of things (very diſtant) one to another, as ſhall aſtoniſh the Spectators with wonderful effects. But there is too great reaſon to think they are not good Spirits, that do theſe feats; becauſe they revive hereby the ancient ſuperſtition, or uphold the Image of it ſtill in the Chriſtian World; to the great diſhonour of our Saviour, and the indangering the Souls of his People. Who have been ſo far miſled, as not only to fancy great Virtue in the Images of the Saints; and to cry up alſo ſome Images, particularly of our Lady (of *Loretto* for inſtance) as indued with ſome ſingular power and virtue, which is not to be found in others: but to honour them ſo highly, as for one Miracle ſaid to be done by a *Crucifix*, to report a hundred to be wrought at ſuch or ſuch a Shrine of hers.

It is very conſiderable alſo (to omit the reſt) which he notes, in the V. Book, out of the Law of *Moſes*; that it ſuppoſes God might permit ſome wonders to be done, only for their trial; whether the People would perſiſt in the worſhip of the true God; which had been confirmed by undoubted and far greater and more numerous Miracles. Read *Deuter.* xiii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

This is excellently expreſſed, and with advantage, by a great Man of our own; in theſe words, or to this effect. The Doctrine which we believe, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, as is confeſſed on all ſides, by innumerable ſupernatural and truly Divine Miracles; and conſequently the Doctrine of the *Roman* Church, which in many points is plainly oppoſite to the Bible, is condemned by them: I mean the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. And therefore

if

if any ſtrange things have been done in that Church, they prove nothing but the truth of Scripture: which foretold, that (God's Providence permitting it, and the wickedneſs of the World deſerving it) *ſtrange ſigns, and wonders ſhould be wrought, to confirm falſe doctrine; that they which love not the Truth might be given over to ſtrong deluſions.* So that now we have reaſon rather to ſuſpect and be afraid of pretended Miracles, as ſigns of falſe Doctrine; than much to regard them, as certain arguments of Truth. *Neither is it ſtrange, that God ſhould permit ſome true wonders to be done, to delude thoſe who have forged ſo many wonders, to deceive the World.*

SECT. XVI.

Anſwer to another Objection.

BUT it is not likely, they ſay, that Religion ſhould be thus depraved in the *Roman* Church; becauſe their Anceſtors were Men of greater vertue and honeſty, than to ſuffer the leaſt alteration.

Which is the very thing that is alledged by the *Jews*, why they ſhould not believe our Saviour was unjuſtly condemned, and his Religion rejected by their Prieſts and Elders; as *Grotius* obſerves in the *Vth.* Book. Out of which I might produce ſeveral things, as I have done out of the foregoing, to prove the vanity of the *Romiſh* Traditions, as well as of the *Jewiſh*; and ſhew alſo how they have brought back *Judaiſm*, in a great meaſure, by the vaſt burden of Rites and

and Ceremonies, wherewith they have incumbered Christian Religion: But I shall wave all this (because I would make this Book as short as the rest) and only observe, in answer to what was now pretended; that whosoever shall consider (as he speaks of the Ancestors of the *Jews*) what kind of Men for several Ages sate in the Chair of *Rome*, and how ignorant the People generally were; he cannot wonder at the corruption, of which we complain.

Let him but read, *First*, the censures which their own Authors have passed upon several *Popes*, as meer Epicures, and Men void of all Religion, *&c.* And then the bitter complaints which St. *Bernard* himself makes (and that while he wrote to a Pope) of the Vices which were then annexed, even to the very *Papacy*: and further, the description which such Men, as *Marsilius* of *Padua* make of the Church of *Rome*, the whole Body of which, he saith, was so infected, by the plenitude of power, which is allowed to the Pope, that it might be more truly called a shop of Traffick, nay a Den of Thieves, than a Church of Christ: and (to come nearer to our own times) the forwardness of their People, even since the Reformation, to worship Men as Saints; before they were canonized by the Pope: and he will not think there hath been always such care and caution used about that and such like matters, as they would have us believe.

We have a memorable instance of this thing last mentioned (to meddle with no other) in the Founder of the Jesuits Order, *Ignatius Loiola:* by whose merits People recommended themselves to God (if we may believe the Pope himself) before he was declared to be a Saint.

So

So *Urban* VIII. informs us in his very *Bull* or *Decretal Letters* for his Canonization: where ſeveral miraculous Works are ſaid to have been done for thoſe, who fled to his help, and religiouſly worſhipped his Image, and commended themſelves to him (as the words are) with all their heart. He was made indeed a *Beato* by the preceeding Pope: But the like ſtories are told of *Xavier*, one of *Ignatius* his Companions, unto whoſe interceſſion the People applied themſelves, and hoped in his merits (as the *Bull* for his Sainting tells us) even before he was made a *Beato*. So exceeding prone they have been of late to run into Superſtition; as they were more long ago in the days of St. *Martin*, who broke down an Altar, which had been ſet up by former Biſhops themſelves, in honour of a Martyr, as the People called him: who proved to be no better than a *Highway-man* (as St. *Martin* diſcovered) that had been executed for his Robberies, and there buried.

SECT. XVII.

Popery and Mahometiſm had the ſame Original.

WE may ſafely therefore affirm, that the account which *Grotius* gives, in the beginning of the VI. Book, of the riſe of *Mahometiſm*, may ſerve as well for the Original of *Popery*. Which took its riſe from the great decay of true piety; and the vain jangling that fell out among Chriſtian People, by imploying their

their time in curious Queſtions: which made the vulgar at laſt not know what to believe, and to lay the fault upon the Scriptures; nay to avoid them as hurtful and dangerous. And then it was eaſie to lead them any whither, when they had forſaken the Light which ſhewed them their way: and began alſo to place Religion, not in purity of mind, but in Rites and Ceremonies; and to content themſelves in ſuch things, as ſerved rather to exerciſe the Body, than to amend the Soul.

In ſhort, that falſe Prophet *Mahomet*, and an *Univerſal Biſhop*, ſprang up both together, very near the ſame time: as *Treaſon* and *Idolatry* ſetled themſelves alſo together at the ſame time in the Age following. For the *Pope* under the pretence of retaining Images, which the *Conſtantinopolitane* Emperour deſtroyed, revolted from him; denyed him the tribute that was wont, till then, to be paid him, even out of *Rome* it ſelf, as well as other places; and, denying him all obedience, plainly thruſt him out of *Italy*. This account *Zonaras*, and others give of *Gregory* the II's proceeding againſt *Leo Iſaurus*: and thus *the Biſhop of Rome, by his Papal Authority, became the firſt Author of defection from a lawful Prince, upon the account of Religion.*

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

And ſupports its ſelf by the ſame means.

IF we look further into what was ſaid before about *Mahometiſm*, we ſhall find that *Popery* ſtands, and upholds it ſelf, by the very ſame ſhameful means, which keep up the Religion of that falſe Prophet. By force, that is, and violence: compelling Men, where they have any power, to conſent to what they ſay, or rather to feign a conſent to what they do not believe. Which diſcovers the weakneſs of that Religion, and of the reaſons of thoſe that profeſs it: For he that extorts aſſent (as was ſaid in the Book foregoing) by ſenſe of pain, or fear of puniſhment; plainly confeſſes, by that very proceeding, that he diſtruſts his Arguments.

At the beſt, they require belief of Men, without all liberty of inquiring into Religion. For the vulgar (juſt as in *Turky*) are prohibited to read the Books which are accounted holy: which is a manifeſt ſign of its iniquity (as he there ſpeaks of the *Turkiſh* Religion;) for juſtly may that merchandize be ſuſpected, which is obtruded upon this condition; that it muſt not be lookt into, nor examined. This is the way of the groſſeſt deceivers; who will not ſubmit themſelves to a trial, and refuſe to give any account: but will have us ſubmit to their Authority, and take, what ſuch men as they ſay, upon truſt. Which is the Method of the *Roman* Church, who are wont to put *doubting of any part of their doctrine* among mortal ſins: And ſo, for fear what the

the iſſue may be, will not ſuffer their People to try their Religion; with indifference, that is, with true liberty of judgment, and with a reſolution, to doubt of it, if the grounds of it appear upon examination to be uncertain, and to leave it, if they prove apparently falſe.

It is true indeed (as it there follows) there is not in every Man the like capacity of knowledge, and quickſightedneſs to diſcern between truth and falſhood: Many alſo are carried away into error by pride; others by inordinate paſſions or affections; and ſome by cuſtome and imitation, or by the weakneſs of their underſtandings, and forwardneſs to judge without due conſideration, or advice with their proper Guides. But thoſe very Books, which the *Roman* Church pretends may miſlead Men (and therefore will not let them uſe) teach them in the firſt and principal place to purge themſelves from all naughty affections; and then to be ſober-minded, and not too forward to determine things on their own heads; but to reverence their judgments, who are over them in the Lord: and not to pretend to Religion, nor imagine they can judge a-right, till they be humble, and meek, and without any other deſign, than this alone of ſaving their Souls. Now the Divine Goodneſs forbids us to think, that ſuch Men ſhall not be able to find the way to eternal Salvation, who ſeek for it in God's own Word, and in this manner; without any by-reſpect to honour or worldly advantage; and, with intire ſubmiſſion of themſelves and all they have to Him, imploring his aſſiſtance, that they may attain it. Which are in effect, the very words of *Juſtin Martyr* and *Origen.*

And

And truly, ſince GOD hath implanted in Mens minds the power and faculty of judging; there is no part of truth that better deſerves the imployment of this faculty about it, than that of which we cannot be ignorant without hazard of our Salvation. After this, whoſoever inquires with a godly mind, he ſhall not dangerouſly err: And where ſhould he enquire after it, but in God's moſt Holy Word? without which we cannot know whether there be either Church or Prieſt or any thing elſe, wherein they would have us truſt.

SECT. XIX.

And refuſes to be tried by Scripture.

IT is a manifeſt ſign therefore of impoſture, that, when they cannot for ſhame, but ſometimes ſuffer their Religion to be tried, yet they will not have it tried by the holy Scriptures: *In the reading of which* (as was excellently ſaid in the concluſion of the foregoing Books) *no man can be deceived, but he who hath firſt deceived himſelf.* For the Writers of them were more faithful, and fuller of Divine Inſpiration, than either to defraud us of any neceſſary part of Divine Truth; or to hide it in a Cloud, ſo that we cannot ſee it.

Why then ſhould any body decline this way of trial? unleſs they ſee themſelves ſo manifeſtly condemned by the holy Scriptures; that they dare not let their cauſe be brought into ſo clear a light. Which hurts indeed ſore eyes; but comforts

comforts and delights those that are sound: shewing us so plainly what we are to embrace and what to refuse, and being so sure and so perfect a Guide in all such matters; that St. *Hilary* not only commends and admires the Emperor *Constantius* for desiring a Faith, according to what was written: But saith, *He is an Antichrist who refuses this; and an Anathema that counterfeits it.* And thereupon calls to him in this manner; *O Emperor, thou seekest for Faith; hearken to it, not out of new little Papers, but of the Books of God.* There we must seek for it, if we mean to find it: and if they be silent and can tell us nothing (says St. *Ambrose*) who shall dare to speak?

Let us not therefore bring deceitful ballances (they are the words of St. *Austin*, in his *second* Book of Baptism, Chap. vi.) *wherein we may weigh what we list, and as we list, after our own liking; saying, This is heavy, that is light: But let us bring the Divine Ballance, out of the holy Scriptures (as out of the Lords Treasures) and in that let us weigh what is most ponderous: or rather let not us weigh, but acknowledge those things, which are already weighed by the Lord.*

Yes, say they of the Church of *Rome*, we will be put into that Ballance, and tryed by the Scriptures; but not by them alone. Which is, in effect, to refuse to be tried by them: for they give testimony to their own fulness, and perfection and plainness too, in things necessary; and so do all other Christian Writers that succeeded the Apostles; who do not send us to turn over we know not how many other Volumes, but tell us here we may be abundantly satisfied. In so much that the first Christian Emperor *Constantine* (the Father of *Constantius*

now mentioned) admoniſhed the Biſhops in the famous Council of *Nice* to conſult with theſe heavenly inſpired Writings, as their Guide and Rule in all their Debates; becauſe *they perſpicuouſly inſtruct us*, (as his very words are) *what to believe in divine things, and therefore they ought*, he told them, *to fetch from thence, the Reſolution of thoſe things, which ſhould come in queſtion.* To which Cardinal *Bellarmine* indeed is pleaſed to ſay, that *Conſtantine* truly was *a Great Emperor, but no great Doctor*: But as herein he ſpeaks too ſcornfully of him; ſo he reflects no leſs upon the underſtanding and judgment of thoſe venerable Fathers aſſembled in that Council, which (as *Theodoret* tells us in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory) was compoſed of Men excelling in Apoſtolical gifts, and many of them carried in their Bodies the marks of the Lord Jeſus, and were, for the far greater part, a Multitude of Martyrs aſſembled together: who all conſented unto, and followed this wholſom counſel of the Emperour: (as he there teſtifies) knowing he did but ſpeak the ſenſe of the truly Catholick Church.

Which did not meerly bid Men hear it, and bring all doctrines to its touchſtone: but confeſſed plainly that even the Church it ſelf muſt be tried by the Scriptures. It is the expreſs ſentence of the ſame St. *Auſtin*, in his Book of the *Unity of the Church*. Where in the ſecond Chapter he ſaith, the queſtion then was (as it is now) *where is the Church?* Now what ſhall we do, ſays he? ſeek for it in our own words? or in the words of our Head, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? *I think we ought to ſeek it rather in his words, who is the Truth; and beſt knows his own Body.* And in

the

the beginning of the *third* Chapter, thus proceeds; *Let us not hear, thus ſay I, and thus ſayeſt thou: but let us hear, thus ſaith the Lord. The Lords Books there are certainly; to whoſe authority we both conſent, we both believe, we both yield obedience: there let us ſeek the Church; there let us diſcuſs our cauſe.*

And to name no more, the Author of the imperfect work upon St. *Matthew*, (carrying the name of S. *Chryſoſtome*) declares this ſo fully, that it leaves no doubt in us, what courſe they took for ſatisfaction in this buſineſs. *Heretofore*, ſays he, *there were many ways, whereby one might know what was the true Church of Chriſt; and what was Gentiliſm: but now there is no way to know what is the true Church of Chriſt, but by the Scriptures. Why ſo? Becauſe all thoſe things which belong properly to Chriſt in truth and reality; thoſe hereſies have alſo in ſhew and in appearance. They have Scriptures, Baptiſm, Euchariſt, and all the reſt, even Chriſt himſelf; like as we have. Therefore if any would know which is the true Church of Chriſt; how ſhould he know it, in ſuch a confuſion of multitude, but only by the Scriptures?* which he repeats over again a little after, *he therefore that would know which is the true Church of Chriſt, how ſhould he know it but by the Scriptures?*

To them let us go, and in them let us reſt: and if you are the Diſciples of the Goſpel, may we ſay to the *Romaniſts* (as *Athanaſius* does to the followers of *Apolinarius*, in his Book about the *Incarnation of Chriſt*) 'Do not ſpeak unrighteouſly againſt the Lord, but walk in what 'is written and done. But if you will talk of 'different things from what are written, why do 'you contend with us; who dare not hear nor

'ſpeak, beſide thoſe things which are written? 'Our Lord telling us, *if you abide in the word,* 'even in my word, you ſhall be free indeed. What 'immodeit frenzy is this, to ſpeak things, which 'are not written? and deviſe things which are 'ſtrangers to piety?

To which, if we faithfully adhere, there is this to be added for our incouragement; that though we ſhould miſtake in the ſenſe of the Scriptures, yet they ſecure us, that if we with honeſt and upright hearts continue to inquire after the truth, (deſigning nothing elſe) that error ſhall not prejudice us: But God will either diſcover to us his mind, or not condemn us for our error of weakneſs, not of wilfulneſs.

SECT. XX.

The Vanity of their appeal to Traditions.

AS for Interpretations of Scripture by Tradition, they may be pretended and talkt of; but cannot be produced in moſt places, where we are deſirous of that help: which we gladly receive, when we can have it by a truly Univerſal conſent. But as for particular interpretations of the ancient Fathers, they do not abſolutely agree with each other, in their Expoſitions of thoſe Texts, upon which controverſies of greateſt moment are now grounded. Nay, they oft-times propound divers interpretations alike probable. And ſometimes plainly intimate their doubtfulneſs, and make but imperfect conjectures; in ſuch a manner, as if they

they intended to excite Posterity to seek for further resolution. Therefore we shall not dissent from them, though we do not assent to all their particular interpretations. Nay, we cannot more dissent from them, than by following their interpretations on such strict terms as the *Romanists* would bind us all to do; when they seem to make for their advantage. For then, there is not the least surmise or conjecture of any one Father, but must suffice against the joint Authority of all the rest. To which Rule (of serving their interest) they are so true, that they stick not to reject any interpretation of the Fathers, when they think good: and, which is more, to prefer their own expositions before theirs.

And so they do in the matter of all other Traditions, though called Apostolical. For instance, the threefold immersion in Baptism, *which seems to have flowed from an Apostolical Canon, is long ago abolished* (saith their *Canus*) *by a contrary custom.* And so is the custom of giving Communion to Infants (which prevailed, says their *Maldonate*, for 600 Years in the Church) not only antiquated by them, but decreed to be unlawful. Which clearly shews that they might, if they pleased, make an end of all the controversies that trouble the Church; without any disparagement (but rather with the increase) of its Authority. For challenging a power to alter even the Institutions of Jesus Christ, (as they have done in taking away the Cup from the People in the Holy Comunion) and much more those of the Apostles: what need all this stir about Apostolical Traditions, or the Decrees of the Church? which they may lay aside at their pleasure; and have laid aside, as appears by

many other inſtances, beſides thoſe now named, that may be given of it.

But it is ſufficient for the direction of every honeſt hearted Man to know (which is as certain as any thing of that nature can be, and may be undoubtedly relyed on) that nothing is clearer in the Tradition of the Church than this: that the Doctors of it declare the Scriptures to be full and perſpicuous in all needful matters. And therefore, there needs no other Tradition, but the Tradition of the Scriptures: which ſatisfie us abundantly, in the Truth of all thoſe things which are univerſally received.

SECT. XXI.

And their guilt in what they ſay about the Holy Scriptures.

THERE cannot therefore be a greater demonſtration of their guilt than this, that notwithſtanding ſuch evident teſtimonies from the Scriptures themſelves, and the concurrent ſtream of the ancient Doctors of Chriſt's Church: they have been forced (to avoid this trial by the Scriptures) to ſay ſo many ſcandalous things as they have done, in diſparagement of the Sacred Writings. Many of them are commonly known, and I am not willing to repeat the reſt; but only ſay this great truth: that whether they will or no, their Church, ſuch as it is, receives all its Authority from the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures from it. For we can have no notion, as was ſaid before, of a Church, or of its Authority;

rity; but from the Scriptures. Which therefore must be of greater authority, than that which receives authority from them, and be first supposed to be infallible, before they can make us believe any thing else is so. For we must be secure of the proof before we can be sure of the thing proved by it; otherwise it is no proof, but leaves us as much in doubt as we were before it was alledged.

If they say (and what else can be said, with any colour of reason?) that we must indeed learn their Churches infallibility from the Scriptures; but then learn the rest from their Church: mark, I beseech you, what follows. Then it is manifest, *First*, that they themselves make the Scriptures the Rule of Faith, in this one Article, at least, concerning the Catholick Churches infallibility. Which we must therefore believe (and for no other reason) because the Scriptures which we first infallibly believe, do teach and prove it.

Whence it plainly follows that private Men may, and must be assured of the Truth of Scriptures (without the help of their Churches Authority) before they can believe any thing else: because it is the ground for their belief of that infallibility which their Church pretends; which to them is the General Rule of Faith.

And from thence it follows further, that the Scriptures, which to us are the only Rule of Faith, ought to be acknowledged by them to be more than so; even the Rule of their Rule of Faith. And if it be so; what reason can any Man alledge, why it should not be the immediate Rule of Faith (without sending us elsewhere to seek it) in all other Articles of the Creed, as

well as in that of their pretended infallible Church.

We may appeal to all the World, and call Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men to witneſs, between us and the *Roman* Church (as a worthy Champion of our Cauſe did long ago) whether the Articles of Chriſt's Incarnation, his Death, Paſſion, Burial, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion; Interceſſion, the Reſurrection of the Dead, and life everlaſting, *&c.* be not much more plainly ſet down in the Scriptures, to any Man's apprehenſion whatſoever; than the infallibility of the preſent *Roman* Church is, in ſuch words as theſe, *Thou art Peter*, &c. *Feed my Sheep*, or any other from whence they challenge it. And therefore why ſhould we be required to learn theſe, or any other part of Chriſtian Faith meerly from their Church, when we learn them ſo eaſily by the Scriptures; in which they are to be found more clearly delivered, than any thing we read about their Church?

Let no Man doubt, but if the Holy Ghoſt will teach us that Article of the Churches Infallibility, immediately by the Scriptures without the help of the Churches infallible Authority (as they themſelves are forced to confeſs, becauſe elſe the Church can have no authority;) then He will immediately teach us by the ſame Scriptures, any other Article of our Creed, and whatſoever is neceſſary to Salvation, which are plainly and perſpicuouſly enough ſet down in the Scriptures; without the help and aſſiſtance of the Churches infallible authority, which the Scriptures cannot be ſuppoſed to teach, but by places far more doubtful.

SECT.

SECT. XXII.

It is our Wiſdom therefore to adhere to the Scriptures.

TO this Rule then let us ſtick; keeping thoſe words of our Saviour always in mind, 3 *Joh.* 21, 22. *He that doth evil, hateth the light; neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God.* Let that be his Guide, who would not go aſtray in dangerous Paths; into which he cannot fall, who keeps cloſe to the directions of the Holy Books: wherein all neceſſary Truth being ſet down, as the moſt ancient and beſt Doctors unanimouſly agree, we are certain (every way) by believing them, to believe all neceſſary Truth; and if our lives be accordingly (without which, they tell us, our belief will be vain) it is impoſſible we ſhould fail of everlaſting Salvation.

To theſe alone (as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaks for himſelf, in his Book of *Nature and Grace*) we owe an abſolute conſent, without refuſing any thing they propound to us. *Whatſoever it be* (as his words are in his CXII. Epiſtle) *that is confirmed by the perſpicuous authority of the divine Scriptures, thoſe,* viz. *which are canonical in the Church; it muſt be believed without any doubting. But as for any other witneſſes or teſtimonies, to which thou art perſwaded to give credit; thou mayeſt believe them, or not believe them, according as thou perceiveſt them deſerve or not deſerve*

to

to be relied on. A great reverence is due to the Church and its teſtimony (though leſs to the preſent Church of *Rome* than others; becauſe it hath ſo groſly abuſed the World by falſe records, and forged Miracles, and ſuch like things) yet only as to an humane Teſtimony; which cannot equal that of the Holy Scriptures.

SECT. XXIII.

Which have more manifeſt notes of certainty than the Church.

FOR if we take their own way and method, to aſſure our minds that we follow an infallible Guide, there is no *note* which they give of the true Church, which they ſay ought to be our Guide; but pleads far more ſtrongly for the Holy Scriptures, that we ſhould rather follow them, and give an undoubted credit to them. I ſhall not run over all thoſe *Notes*, nor examine the certainty of them; but only briefly name ſome of them, and ſhew, that if they prove any thing, it is the Authority of the Scriptures above the Church.

Firſt, they ſay, the very *name of the Catholick Church* is venerable, and ought to be regarded. But, as that Name is not proper to them alone, ſo, if there be any power in Names to make us reſpect any thing; what more awful than the Name of the *Word of God*, and the *Sacred Scriptures*, which were always given to theſe Books, to which we adviſe all Chriſtians to adhere.

The

The next Note, which is *Antiquity*, is on the ſide of the Scriptures alſo; which more juſtly claim to be ancienter than all other Books, which pretend to any Divinity; than the Catholick Church can claim to be ancienter than all other Societies, which call themſelves by the Name of a Church. Nay, the Doctrine contained therein, muſt be ſuppoſed, as I have ſhewn, to be before the Church; which is made by belief and profeſſion of that Doctrine: and the Old Teſtament certainly written, long before the Church was made Catholick.

As for *unity*, in that the Church is not comparable to the Scriptures, whoſe agreement and conſent of parts is admirable. And if we ſpeak of the ſureſt bond of true *Catholick Unity*, it is as manifeſt as the *Sun*, that the *Holy Scriptures* lay the foundation of it, and preſerve us in it (if we adhere to them) by keeping us cloſe to *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm*: but the Church of *Rome*, which hath uſurped the Name of *Catholick*, makes this bleſſed Unity impoſſible. For, there being but two ways to it, either that we all agree in our Opinions about Religion, or that while we differ, it be no hinderance to Communion; they have made the latter as impoſſible as the former: becauſe they make it abſolutely neceſſary to communion and ſalvation, to believe in every thing as they do.

The like might be ſaid of *Holineſs* and *efficacy* of Doctrine (which depends upon the Churches ſpeaking according to the Scriptures) *ſanctity of the authors* of our Religion (which cannot be known but out of the Scriptures) the *glory of Miracles*, the *light* of *Prophecy*, and all the reſt: but I ſhall only touch upon one more, the *Amplitude*

tude and *Univerſality* of the Church, in which they make their boaſt. But herein the Scriptures moſt evidently excel; their Authority being there ſacred, where the Church of *Rome* (whoſe Notes theſe are) is not known, or not regarded. For all Chriſtians in the World, of whatſoever Sect they be, believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God: whereas they alone ſay, that they are the only true Church of God. All Chriſtians beſides, who know any thing of this pretence of theirs, abſolutely deny it; and maintain the Divinity and Authority of the Scriptures, againſt all their Cavils.

SECT. XXIV.

The great incouragement we have to do ſo.

BY following the Scriptures then, we follow the ſureſt Guide by their own confeſſion. For *firſt*, by following the Scriptures, we are certainly led by God; but by following the Church, we are only led by Men. And conſequently the Faith we build upon the Scriptures is a *Divine* Faith; but the Faith we build upon the authority of the Church meerly, can be no more than *humane*. For the Scriptures are fully and amply proved to be of Divine Authority, by all thoſe Arguments, which are alledged in the *Third* Book of this Work: the like to which cannot be produced to prove the infallible authority of the Church. Which cannot ſo much as pretend that God hath bid us believe it, but by ſending us to the Holy Scriptures; from whence it derives all its Authority. Which

Which is the *ſecond* thing to be conſidered (and here I will take the liberty to tranſcribe part of the diſcourſe of a great Man on this Subject, with ſome Additions) that by following the Scriptures, we follow that which they themſelves are forced to follow (as was noted before) and on which they entirely depend, for the proof of their own authority; on which they would have us entirely depend. Who have reaſon rather to rely, on that which they rely: and in ſo doing tacitly confeſs the Scriptures are of greateſt authority; and that they are ſurer of their Truth, than of the Churches Infallibility.

And *Thirdly*, by following the Scriptures, we follow that which muſt be true, if their Church (which they would have us follow) have any truth in it; for their Church cannot but give atteſtation to them: whereas, if we follow their Church we muſt follow that which, though the Scriptures be true, may be falſe; nay, which, if the Scriptures be true, muſt be falſe, becauſe the Scriptures teſtifie againſt it.

Further, *Fourthly*, to follow the Scriptures, we have God's expreſs Warrant, and Commandment; without any colour for any prohibition: but to believe their Church infallible, we have no commandment, much leſs any expreſs Commandment; nay, have reaſon to think, we are prohibited ſo to do in ſuch words as thoſe, *Beware of falſe Prophets. Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God, &c.* Which require us to examine before we truſt; and conſequently not to give up

our

our ſelves blindfold to thoſe who confidently claim the infallibility of St. *Peter*; but cannot produce any evidence of it.

Again, *Fifthly*, by following the Scriptures, we ſhall keep to that which was always believed, and every where received: but by following the Church of *Rome* we ſhall make our ſelves guilty of the changes and alterations which they have made (as another great Champion of our Church hath obſerved) *in the Apoſtolical Creed*, (by making a new one, containing things that hold no conformity with the Apoſtles) and in the *Apoſtolical ſucceſſion* (by ingroſſing the whole ſucceſſion to *Rome*, and making other Biſhops to be but the *Pope*'s Deputies, as to their Juriſdiction) and in the *Apoſtolical Government* (by erecting a new and Univerſal Monarchy in the Church) and laſtly in the *Apoſtolical Communion*, by excommunicating the greateſt part of the holy Catholick Church.

By *Sixthly*, following the *Roman* Church alſo, we ſhall be bound to hold many things, not only above Reaſon, but againſt it: whereas by following the Scriptures, we ſhall only believe ſome Myſteries, but no impoſſibilities, ſome things above reaſon, but nothing contrary to it. For, though there be things in Scripture, which had they not been revealed, reaſon could not have diſcovered; yet there is nothing there, which being revealed, can by true reaſon be confuted.

Seventhly, Contrary to fleſh and blood indeed there are many things contained in the Scriptures;

ptures; and therefore by following them, we ſhall believe a Religion, which notwithſtanding that great prejudice which Men had to it, prevailed and inlarged it ſelf over the World in a ſhort time; without any aſſiſtance from worldly power, wit or policy; nay, againſt all theſe: whereas the *Roman* Church hath got all its Authority over Mens Conſciences, by no other means, than by deviſing falſe Records, falſe Miracles and Reports (as was ſaid before) and by complying with Mens corrupt affections, or by perſecuting thoſe that would not comply; and by all other ſuch like worldly means, whether of policy or force.

Eighthly, To which add, that by following the Scriptures, we ſhall believe a Religion, whoſe firſt Preachers and Profeſſors could have no worldly ends to ſerve (as hath been demonſtrated in the foregoing Books) but rather were to expect, as they every where found, nothing but diſgrace, vile nay cruel uſage, by all manner of puniſhments: whereas the head of the *Roman* Church, it is even palpable, makes their Religion the Inſtrument of his Ambition, and ſeeks thereby to intitle himſelf, directly or indirectly, to the Monarchy of the World: And beſides, it is evident to him that hath but half an eye, as we ſay, that moſt of the Doctrines which they have added to the Scriptures, make one way or other, for the honour or temporal advantage of the Teachers of them.

Ninthly, Again, following the Scriptures, we ſhall embrace a Religion of admirable ſimplicity: whereas the *Roman* Church and doctrine

is

is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, unsavory Superstitions and Ceremonies: under which its own Children have groaned and heavily complained.

Tenthly, Those Holy Books also teach us, that we must not promise our selves salvation, unless we effectually mortifie all our evil affections and lusts; and forsaking every sin whatsoever, betake our selves to the practice of all Christian Vertue: But the *Roman* Church opens an easier and broader way to Salvation; permitting at least this to be taught for as good and Catholick Doctrine as any other; that though a Man have continued all his life long in a course of sin, without the practice of any vertue, he may notwithstanding be let into Heaven by an act of attrition at the hour of Death, if joyned with confession, or by an act of Contrition without Confession. And therefore in this and several other regards, the Religion of that Church is not so Holy, as the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles delivered in the Scriptures: and consequently is not so likely to come, from the Fountain of Holiness and Goodness.

Eleventhly, But whatsoever ways they are pleased to devise, to humour Mens depraved appetites, we are sure of this advantage by following the Scriptures, which they cannot pretend to by following their Church. That if we happen to entertain an erroneous opinion, grounded, as we think, upon some place of Scripture, it is implicitly retracted and condemned, by our precedent full and intire assent to all things contained in the Scriptures; and our general reso-

lution

lution to hold nothing contrary to them, nor admit any thing (as necessary to salvation) that cannot be proved by them. Which makes the error that we unwittingly and unwillingly hold against the Scriptures, less dangerous: because our adherence to the Scriptures is nearer, closer and firmer, than it is to our particular error. Whereas by following their Church, not knowing what it is (whether the whole Body of People in that Communion, or a General Council, or the *Pope*, in, or out of a Council) we shall have no such excuse for our errors: but they will be rather much aggravated, by our adhering so strictly to a doubtful and uncertain Rule; unto which the People in that Communion sticking closer, than they do to the Word of God, it lessens the value of all the Truths which they believe, and doubles the guilt of all their errors.

And *lastly*, as this is a great satisfaction to our selves, so there is this to be added for the comfort of others also. That by following the Scriptures, we shall learn to bear with one another in our different opinions, about things which cannot thereby be determined; nay, in things which are not directly against it, or wherein we are not yet sufficiently instructed: But by following the *Roman* Church we shall be taught to pass the heaviest sentences upon all those, that believe not in all things, as we do; nay, to take the severest courses with them, though they be Men of the most innocent and useful lives; conforming themselves in all things to the Precepts of Christ Jesus, and to the Authority of their Governours for his sake, where it doth not manifestly contradict Him.

To conclude this, we for our parts are of the ſame mind, even towards them, which *Grotius* before obſerved the Apoſtles were of towards the *Jews*: *From whom*, ſaith he (and let the words be taken, as if ſpoken by us, to thoſe of the *Roman* Communion) *they would not ſo much as exact an acknowledgment of their hapineſs, in being delivered from the heavy Yoke of Rites and Ceremonies that lay upon them: But, if they would admit of the Commandments of Chriſt, which are full of all goodneſs, eaſily permitted them to follow what courſe of life they pleaſed in matters of indifferency; provided they would not impoſe the neceſſity of obſerving them upon others.*

SECT. XXV.

Concluſion of all.

UPON theſe terms we are ready to agree with them; and I conclude all with this memorable Propoſal, which *Eraſmus* made in a Letter to *Johannes Slechta*, a Friend of his in *Bohemia*, at the very beginning of the Reformation, MDXIX.

This would reconcile People to the Church of Rome, *if all things were not ſo particularly defined, and made a matter of Faith, which we would have to belong to it: but thoſe only which are evidently expreſſed in the Holy Scriptures; or without which we do not ſee any way to be ſaved.*

To

To this purpoſe a few things are ſufficient; and a few things may be ſooner perſwaded than a great many.

Now out of one Article, we make Six Hundred: ſome of which are ſuch, that, without endangering Piety, we may either be ignorant, or doubt of them. And, ſuch is the nature of Mankind, that what is once defined, we hold tooth and nail; and will by no means part with it.

But when all's done, the ſumm of Chriſtian Philoſophy lies in this; That we underſtand all our Hope to be placed in God, who freely gives us all things by his Son Jeſus; by whoſe Death we are redeemed, into whoſe Body we are planted by Baptiſm; that being dead to the luſt of this World, we may live according to his Doctrine and Example; not only abſtaining from all evil, but indeavouring to deſerve well of every Body: and that if any adverſity happen, we bear it couragiouſly, in hope of a future reward; which, without all doubt, waits for all pious Perſons at the coming of Chriſt: and that we make ſuch progreſs from vertue to vertue; as notwithſtanding to arrogate nothing to our ſelves, but to aſcribe all the good, that is in us, or that we can do, unto GOD.

Theſe things chiefly are to be inculcated, and beaten into the minds of Men; ſo that they become, as it were, their Nature. But if any will ſearch into thoſe things, which are more abſtruſe about the Divine Nature, the Hypoſtaſis of Chriſt, or the Sacraments, that they may raiſe their minds the higher, and draw them from things here below; let them do ſo: provided that every body be not compelled preſently to believe, what ſeems good to this or that Perſon.

For as out of large Deeds ariſe ſooner Law-ſuits; ſo are differences begotten, by very many definitions.

And let us not be aſhamed to anſwer to ſome things, God knows how it may be done: it is ſufficient for me to believe that it is done.

I know that Chriſt's pure Body and Blood is to be purely received by thoſe that are Pure; and that He would have this to be a moſt holy token and pledge, both of his love to us, and of our Chriſtian concord among our ſelves. And therefore I will examine my ſelf, and make a ſtrict ſearch; whether there be any thing in me that ill agrees with Chriſt; whether any diſcord with my Neighbour.

But how the Ten Predicaments are there, how the Bread is Tranſubſtantiated by the myſtical words, (or, as He explains himſelf in the latter end of his Book, upon lxxxiv. Pſal.) *how the body of Chriſt is there, whether under the ſubſtance of Bread, or under the ſpecies of Bread and Wine, and ſuch like; doth not much conduce, in my judgment, to proficiency in piety,* &c.

By theſe, and other ſuch innumerable diſputations, in which ſome triumph; the minds of Men are called away from thoſe things, which alone are to the purpoſe.

To conclude, it will be of great moment to eſtabliſh the concord of the World; if all ſecular Princes, and eſpecially the Biſhop of Rome, *would abſtain from all appearance of Tyranny, and of Covetouſneſs.*

For Men eaſily ſtart back, when they ſee ſlavery is prepared for them; when they ſee they are not invited to piety, but inveigled to be made a prey.

If they perceive us to be harmleſs, to be beneficent; they will moſt eaſily credit us, and intruſt themſelves with us. Thus He.

It

It would not be very hard to make a longer Book on this Subject: But this is ſufficient (as *Grotius* ſpeaks in the beginning of this Diſcourſe, about the *Truth of Chriſtian Religion*) to convince thoſe whoſe underſtandings are rightly diſpoſed, and are not pertinaciouſly ſet againſt all further information. But no arguments can be found of force enough to convince a froward will, and perſwade perverſe affections: which make Men uncapable of Moral Truth, moſt of all of Divine. *Which will not enter* (as the wiſe man ſpeaks) *into a malicious Soul; nor dwell in the Body that is ſubject unto ſin. For the Holy Spirit of Diſcipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without underſtanding, and will not abide when unrighteouſneſs cometh in.*

THE END.

A

RECAPITULATION
OF THE
Principal Things handled
IN THIS
WORK:

According to the ſeveral Sections of each Book.

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